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Inserts: Prominent Musical Personalities — Past and Present

No. 12 — GERALDINE FARRAR

(These pictures are for framing at the wish of the reader. They should be cut apart with a knife.)

RECORDED PIANO MUSIC OF BRAHMS

V. G. BREWSAUGH

THE HISTORIC ROLE OF THE DOMESTIC keyboard instrument has been, like that of its ancient precursor the lute, largely that of providing a medium through which a single performer can recreate under his own fingers a tonal world embracing man's entire musical experience. In the 16th and 17th centuries madrigals and other vocal polyphonic compositions were transcribed for the lute or the harpsichord, and much of the piano literature of the 18th and early 19th centuries, however great as absolute music, represents a keyboard adaptation of operatic, chamber-music or orchestral idioms, sometimes with but scant consideration for effects peculiar to the instrument.

The countless uncomfortable passages in classic chamber music where the piano must vie with its singing partners attest that the instrument, evidently often played with satisfaction even when out of tune, was used as a substitute for an unattainable ideal of tone. Polyphonic writing for a solo violin, cantabile movements for the percussive keyboard instruments, and the composition of such works as the *Hammerklavier Sonata*, the *Grosse Fuge*, and the finale of the *Ninth Symphony* are only a few instances which indicate that Occidental musical aesthetics is based upon the assumption that the imagination of the listener must add what the actual sound only implies. To be sure, there are pages from all the classic writers, particularly in the last sonatas of Beethoven, where pure keyboard effects are achieved, but it remained for Chopin and his contemporaries to invent an idiom which exploits the merits of the instrument and even employs its defects to advantage.

If piano recording as yet fails to withstand comparison with actual playing on a modern concert grand, the loss is not as great as in the case of other types of music,

since the aural effect is at least equal to what is often heard in large auditoriums or upon poor instruments. This is particularly true of those compositions which depend more upon thematic treatment, counterpoint, musical logic, structural form, and melodic and thematic interest, rather than upon pure sensuous beauty of sound, "atmosphere", and tone-color. While not devoid of these latter attributes, the piano music of Johannes Brahms, along with that of Beethoven, is especially suitable for recording.

On September 30, 1853 Brahms played for the Schumanns in Düsseldorf the two piano sonatas, Opp. 1 and 2, eliciting Robert's enthusiastic article *Neue Bahnen* in the *Zeitschrift für Musik*. The one in F sharp minor (Op. 2), first in order of composition, has recently received a splendid recording.* Composed at the age of nineteen, it is valuable material for the studying of Brahms' development. The recording will make it accessible to those unable to cope with its rather strenuous technical difficulties. Modern listeners find it difficult to understand Schumann's enthusiasm and his remark that Brahms like Minerva sprang full-fledged from Jupiter's head. Brahms may later have slept as Liszt played for him his *B minor Sonata*, but this sonata, Opus 2, despite a few characteristic traits of phrasing and rhythm, contains considerable "sound and fury", usually associated with the Hungarian's works. The next sonata and the *Scherzo*, Op. 4, finished soon afterwards, show immense progress. The scherzo is slightly Chopinesque, in the manner of his first two scherzi; the form resembles that of the later Beethoven works in this genre; in mood it is already *echt* Brahms. An excellent re-

*Played by Arthur Loesser, head of the piano department of the Cleveland Institute of Musical Art (Friends of Recorded Music discs 15, 16, 17).

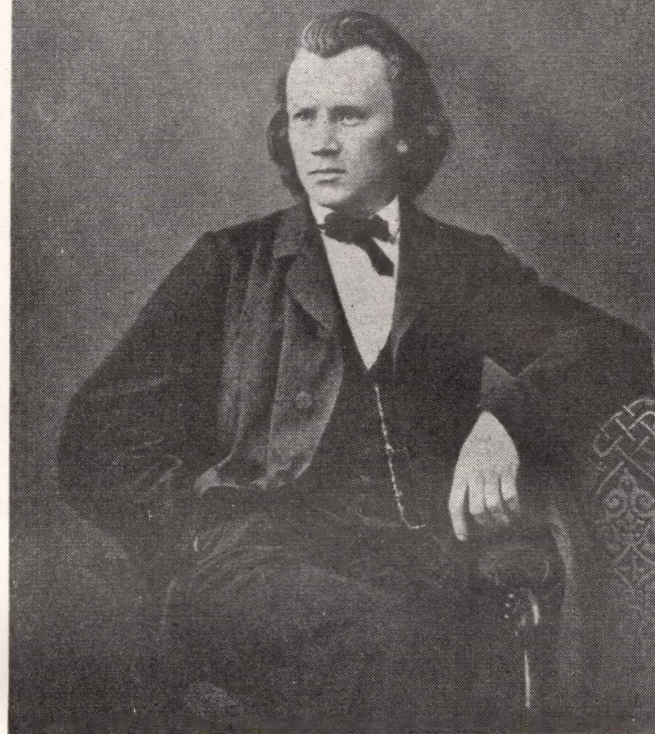
cording by Backhaus is found on Victor disc 7989 in Set 202. The work deserves to be better known. Grainger's recording of the *F minor Sonata, Opus 5*, now apparently withdrawn, still sounds very well on a good machine. Even in the early days Mr. Grainger and the Columbia engineers always managed to turn out a recording which "sounded". Opus 5 is a worthy peer of the works of Brahms' maturity and deserves a modern recording.

The *Ballade, Op. 10, No. 1* ("Edward"), dating from 1856, is in the mature Brahms manner — orchestral masses of sound, good basses, cross-rhythms. Both listed recordings are good. Backhaus on Victor disc 7988 achieves a better climax in the middle *allegro*; Harriet Cohen (C-LX70) gives a clearer delineation of detail and has the advantage of quieter record surface. Six years ago a genuine "pp" was unknown in piano recording and it is not heard here. The second *Ballade* is coupled with No. 1 by Backhaus. Here Brahms employs the 19th-century bravura with more felicitous effect than in the grandiloquent *F sharp minor Sonata*. The two *Intermezzi, Op. 10*, exhibit the same polyrhythmic tendencies as the ballades; they have not been recorded.

Beethoven's Successor

Five years separate Opus 10 from the next piano solos. The *Variationen über ein eigenes Thema, Op. 21, No. 1* benefit from the experience gained in the *D minor Piano Concerto* and other intervening works. A very capable recording by Backhaus (Victor 14227) shows Brahms already a worthy successor of Beethoven and Bach in writing variations that are not mere "divisions" or decorations. While the piano is skillfully combined with other instruments at this period, the solo works show a tendency to extract the fullest possible effect of orchestral masses of sound.

Along with the *Etudes symphoniques* of Schumann, the *Variations on a Theme of Handel, Op. 24*, deserve to rank among the half-dozen truly monumental works in the Romantic literature for the piano. For some inscrutable reason the recording by Moiseievitch (Victor Set 114) has never, neither at the time of its publication in England nor later in America, been accorded adequate recognition for the noble, poetic and musicianly performance it is. Transcending the limitations of 1930 recording technic, here is an interpretation in which the whole range of shading and phrasing is so exploited that



each of these polyphonic, complex variations is presented with characteristic tone-color and mood; interest is maintained in the repetitions by altered emphasis on inner voices, and the whole work is held together by a judicious choice of tempi and dynamics. Moiseievitch's tempi and *rubati* never degenerate into the deplorable rush and hurry which have marred so much otherwise good piano playing during the past years. Perhaps modern streamline tendencies have permanently invaded art also, with the tacit approval of public and critics alike. Schnabel's recording of the *Hammerklavier Sonata* seems to be universally esteemed above the splendid rendition of Kempff, who wisely disregarded Beethoven's own metronome mark as impractical on a modern instrument. The same preference for speed has generally given the Barer version of the Schumann *Toccata* more favorable notice than the musicianly performance of Lhévinne. Frequent repetition on a phonograph is a pitiless ordeal for piano music. The Brahms-Handel recording withstands this test better than most recorded performances. Written in 1861, when Brahms was 28, often played by him and even winning Wagner's unqualified praise, this work unites ripe musical content with scholarly writing; there is neither padding nor pyrotechnics calcu-

lated for cheap applause. Keyboard writing from the Rococo age to the time of Chopin, Schumann, and Liszt is all summed up in this work.

The *Variations on a Theme of Paganini*, Op. 35 are more in the virtuoso manner, yet they never descend to mere display; the most modern technical equipment is essential but subordinate to sound musical thought. This violin theme, for which pianoforte writers have had such a strange fondness, suggested hitherto unsuspected possibilities to Brahms. Liszt's variations can be heard on Polydor disc 95111. The comparison between the two works is interesting, though the recording does less justice to the Liszt than to the Brahms, which is also now outmoded. Even more interesting is the comparison of the Backhaus performance (Victor discs 7419/20) and the magnificent recent version by Egon Petri (Col. Set X-80). The carefully graded nuances, variety and color in tone and phrasing, and well developed climaxes of the latter make it much superior to the older version, although with equally good recording Herr Backhaus' performance would certainly find many admirers.

The Waltzes

The *Waltzes*, Op. 39*, appeared in 1867 in three versions by the composer. The dozens of recordings of various "derangements" of No. 15, originally in A major, have been of doubtful value in enhancing Brahms' fame as a composer. Several of the other waltzes in this group are also to be had on records.

A gap of 13 years, during which the first two symphonies, three string quartets, the *Requiem*, and many other works were written, separates the *Waltzes* from the group of eight pieces comprising Opus 76. Here for the first time are effects conveyable only on the piano. This is particularly true of No. 2 and No. 3 which are as pianistic as anything by Chopin. Of the six recordings of Op. 76, No. 2 that have been compared, only Columbia disc 9074M by Myra Hess and Victor disc 14516 are listed in the latest American catalogues. The former, although older, is a much more careful performance. Backhaus' performance is surprisingly unrhythmic and hurried. The obsolete or rare recordings of this piece are interesting; some are extremely good, others unbelievably bad. A good recording of No. 4 by Harriet

Cohen, is found coupled with the first *Ballade*. Eileen Joyce presents a very colorful and authoritative delineation of the rhythmic subtleties of No. 6 (Decca 25174). The last two numbers of this work contain many of the endearing qualities of Brahms' chamber music. Victor disc 7991 offers an excellent recording of both numbers. No. 8 is found also on Ultraphone EP919 in a fairly good performance by A. de Radvan. French instruments record poorly. Whoever said "the French have three of the worst 'good' pianos in the world" knew whereof he spoke.

The *Rhapsodies*, Op. 79 (1880) show the same consideration for pianoforte effect which characterizes the *Violin Sonata*, Op. 78; De Pachmann once said that Brahms himself played these works "very roughly". Good recorded performances are to be had by Backhaus on Victor discs 7993 and 7994 respectively. The Polydor versions by Rehberg do not sound well on a modern phonograph, but used to be thought quite effective on an acoustic machine.*

A New World

Twelve years later (1892) Opus 116 was published. The last piano works open a new world to the instrument. The first, second, and fourth numbers have been recorded by Backhaus. His more recent album (Victor set M-321) is freer from the thickness and tendency towards tubbiness which characterized his earlier recordings (Victor set M-202). The intense and expressive *Intermezzo in E major*, Op. 116, No. 4, discloses that Brahms had mastered the resources of the instrument. The seventh number has been superbly recorded by Eileen Joyce (Decca 25391). In Opus 117, published the same year, the first intermezzo bears a motto from Herder's translation of "Lady Anne Bothwell's Lament". The melody in the inner voice is in a register which records well. Versions by Backhaus and by Samuel (Victor) and by Murdoch and Erdmann (Decca) have been compared; they are all good. The Victor surfaces and record material, however, are much better than the Decca. There are several other recordings. The two performances of the second intermezzo (by Backhaus and Erdmann) capture its wistful melancholy,

(Continued on Page 247)

*The 16 waltzes, ideally played by Backhaus, are included in Victor set M-321. A new recording by Kitain is reviewed elsewhere in this issue.

— Editor.

* Since this article was written, a recording of the *G minor Rhapsody*, played by Arthur Rubinstein, was issued by Victor. It was reviewed in the August issue. — Editor.

GEBRAUCHSMUSIK

MID-EIGHTEENTH CENTURY STYLE

MOSES SMITH

IN THE THIRD DECADE OF THE PRESENT century a group of composers, principally German, evolved the concept of "*Gebrauchsmusik*", i. e., music for use. In a brief description of this concept Theodore M. Finney, in his "History of Music", mentions as its principal characteristics a new social function for music, an attempt to contribute richness to a wide group of listeners and performers: music is written for performance by children and inexpert amateurs; music is composed that demands the co-operation of an adult audience; music is written directly for radio performance and for the films, the composer being completely aware of the fact that he is addressing a far larger audience than the concert-halls contain, and an audience with a considerably different background. There is the attempt—whether sincere or artificial Mr. Finney is unprepared to say categorically — to *write down* to a large public.

It does not require a close knowledge of the history of music to recognize that this concept is hardly new. Perhaps the emphasis is new, as we should expect in accordance with the speed and intensity of life and living in our time. But writing music for pupils, even on the part of the leading composers, was common enough before the Romantic movement with its emphasis on art for art's sake placed the composer on a pedestal that was surrounded by a rail at a sufficient distance to prevent his being contaminated by a mundane public. J. S. Bach, to single out a well-known case, wrote music for his brood of children-pupils. Mozart wrote for pupils and amateurs, taking due notice of their technical and musical limitations. Haydn wrote music requiring a baryton for performance — at least 175 such compositions, according to Pohl — because his princely employer at Esterhazy was

proud of his skill on that stringed instrument and was eager to display it. I shall presently have more to say of music for a specialized kind of function — pieces written for ceremonial and social occasions.

Gebrauchsmusik and, in fact, much of the music written by leading composers during the past fifteen years, in its stressing of the aspect of entertainment, is closely related to the type of mid-eighteenth-century music that constitutes my principal topic. One may mention here the avidity with which composers took up jazz a few years ago. Now jazz has intrinsically two functions and only two — entertainment and accompaniment for dancing. In the eighteenth century the best composers wrote marches and dance music because they would lose their jobs if they did not. In the twentieth some of the best composers — or would-be composers — wrote jazz because of a pathetic belief that they were enriching the substance of the art of music; others, for a more negative reason, because they would dispel the fog of seriousness in which the nineteenth century had encircled so-called serious music. Two hundred years ago composers of light music were working from an economic necessity; in a more recent day composers were impelled, if at all, only by what was deemed an artistic necessity. The irony is complete when we realize, from the most casual glance at a number of scores of the eighteenth-century composers, that they turned out charming music in this entertainment vein no matter how little relish they may have had for the task. In those days the business of a composer was not only to compose but also to take orders.

In an admirable little life of Haydn, Michel Brenet — who, by the way, was a woman whose real name was Marie Bobillier — gives an account of the typical milieu

and working conditions of a composer in Central Europe during the middle of the eighteenth century. "In all the noblemen's dwellings," she says, "large and small, of Germany, Austria, Hungary and Bohemia, hundreds of musicians at that time led" lives similar to Haydn's. "Like Haydn, they rose with the dawn to write, in the silent morning hours, new compositions which they rehearsed during the day and conducted in the evening. It was scarcely possible for them to trouble about the ultimate fate of the works which accumulated in the music cupboards, dictated as they usually were either by circumstances or by the caprice of the person they served. Still less did they think of breaking the bars of their cage. Until Beethoven, who refused to wear the yoke, the great majority of German musicians held it an enviable honor to belong to a master, and were content with a slavery which freed them from the material cares of life. At Esterhazy the vocalists and the instrumentalists were lodged, with the rest of the domestic staff, in the servants' quarters, where the Kapellmeister was allowed a suite of three rooms, married men were given two rooms, and bachelors shared one room between two."

Haydn and His Employer

If we examine, in Pohl's life of Haydn, the text of the contract entered into by Haydn and his employer, Prince Esterhazy, defining the terms, duties and remuneration for Haydn's services, we find corroborating details and others that help us to round out the picture of a position which was, on the whole, better than average for its time. The first clause explains that Haydn is to be assistant in name to the ageing incumbent of the Kapellmeister's position, Gregorius Werner, but in fact is to be in complete charge of practically everything except the chorus. Then follows a series of instructions governing Haydn's official and personal behavior, many of which are humiliating by our standards but which we may regard as typical in Haydn's time: He is to behave in a manner seemly to a house-officer on a princely estate and he is made responsible for the similar behavior of his assistants, as well as being required to avoid brutal treatment of them; he must be careful, while on duty, always to appear in uniform and he must exact the same obedience from his musicians (mention is made even of white stockings and linen and powdered wigs, either in a tail or in a net).

The ceremonial and disciplinary details continue at some length in this engrossing document. The fact that the description of Haydn's musical duties comes later — as if as an afterthought — is interpreted by Brenet as an indication that they may have seemed less important in the mind of the Prince. Haydn is assigned the task of composing all the required music, which is to be reserved exclusively for the Prince and which is to be kept secret and uncopied. He is forbidden to write for others without permission from the Prince. He is to be in readiness before and after dinner every day, whether the Prince is in Vienna or elsewhere, to make music and to take orders. He must be similarly responsible for the instant availability of his assistants. He is to be in charge of the music and the instruments; to teach the singers; to practice his own instruments, etc., etc.

Composing in Large Orders

How formidable was the task of composing alone may be gathered from the example, quoted by Brenet, of Dittersdorf, who in a single evening at the Bishop of Grosswardein's conducted or played a long and short cantata, two long symphonies and a short one, and a violin concerto, all of which he composed himself. In the case of Haydn, whose Prince had a huge establishment, there was music to be written for chapel services, for the opera house and the marionette theatre on the estate and for the innumerable ceremonies and occasions, not to mention daily meals, dancing and so forth.

To come more directly now to the so-called entertainment music of the specialized type under consideration (I shall not touch on vocal music at all), Pohl lists no less than twenty-one divertimenti in his thematic catalogue of Haydn's works extending over the years from 1766 to 1790, all of which, of course, were spent in the service of Prince Esterhazy. The earlier and later years (as well as part of the season during the Esterhazy period) were largely spent in Vienna, where the demand for cassations, divertimenti, serenades and dances was not less. For balls in London and Vienna Haydn wrote almost eighty minuets and German dances. The catalogue appended to the article on Haydn in Grove's Dictionary lists some sixty-six pieces for strings and wind, including divertimenti; concerted pieces, seven nocturnes, serenades, seven marches, six scherzandos, a sextet, several quintets, twelve collections of minuets and allemandes, 175 pieces for baryton with other

instruments, and numerous other works for a solo instrument or a small group, which, for want of a better name, are referred to as divertimenti.

I regret that I have to describe Haydn's works thus at second hand, because next to nothing of this material has been published, and that little is not easily available. As to the quality of this part of his music, we may rest for a while with the dictum of Hadow that there is "nothing more false than to regard Haydn as merely a court musician, writing with ready and facile talent the *pièces d'occasion* that were needed for the theater or the reception room." Haydn's patronage, he points out, was enlightened: mannered or artificial work was not wanted.

Mozart's "Music For Use"

In the case of Mozart, of course, our difficulties as to first-hand material vanish. In the four volumes of his collected works devoted to the kind of music under consideration here, there are two cassations, eleven serenades, a nocturne, sixteen divertimenti, forty-four minuets, forty-nine German dances, thirty contra-dances and thirteen marches. I am leaving out of account a few of the miscellaneous pieces, including several that were probably movements of otherwise unknown symphonies. Some of the marches, it is evident from the scholarly volumes of Wyzewa and Saint-Foix, are meant to be included among the cassations or serenades. There is little doubt that much of Mozart's music in this line has been lost, since it is evident, from several sources, that he wrote, for example, more than two cassations. Outside of the four volumes, there are two divertimenti written in 1775 (K. 226 and 227) and, of course, that unique creation, *Eine kleine Nachtmusik*.

Furthermore, it is difficult in this period, to draw the line. Violin concertos, it would seem at first glance, can hardly be included among so-called entertainment music of the type I have been discussing. Yet we know that several little violin concertos were written by Mozart for performance between movements of serenades. The relative lightness or seriousness of the style of a given work, while it may help in our classification, is not always decisive. For example, in the late summer of 1783, two years after Mozart's humiliating dismissal from the employ of the Salzburg Archbishop, he returned to Salzburg for a visit to his father and to introduce his wife, Constanze. While he was there his former chief at Salzburg, Michael Haydn, brother of Joseph, was called on

by the Archbishop for a pair of duets for violin and viola. Michael was ill; to help him Mozart wrote the duets for him. The Archbishop probably never suspected that anyone but his court-composer had done them. Yet into these two pieces, which may have been intended for the most frivolous use, Mozart put his greatest care. (The second, in B-flat major, is played by Simon Goldberg and Paul Hindemith on Columbia records 68285-6).

The Salzburg Days

The larger part of Mozart's music in the entertainment category as well as a good deal which, while listed under other categories, was ephemeral in intent, was written during those four humiliating years, 1773 to 1777, when Mozart, returned from his third trip to Italy, was in bondage at the Salzburg court. He had to do with a most unsympathetic protector, a man of poor and almost vicious taste, thoroughly unaware of Mozart's genius and not pleased when Mozart, in a frantic effort to please, turned out works of genius in the required *style galant*. This "galant" style, largely molded by Italian influences, was not baneful in its effect on Mozart's subsequent development, as Henri Ghéon points out in his book, "In Search of Mozart." On the contrary, it supplied the necessary balance for the later German influences, a balance that was never lost in Mozart's most inspired flights. In that style is the adorable, fairly familiar *Violin Concerto in D* (K. 218; Columbia album 224, played by Szigeti and the London Philharmonic under Beecham) and numerous other works that we no longer regard as strictly entertainment music. The latter Mozart was now turning out with incredible speed. In the midst of a rococo setting Mozart was writing rococo music. And if at the Archbishop's summer residence only wind instruments were allowed — because in the midst of a feast, string instruments were regarded as tearing at one's entrails, whereas the oboe and bassoon imitated and stimulated the digestive rumblings — then Mozart wrote for winds and inserted in his music many a joke which, very likely, was not always appreciated.

The essence of the "gallant" style was that the memory was not to be trusted. That is why the *da capo* was universal. Brevity was the virtue: "Say everything, but say it in a few words." This is the essence, too, of the early Mozart, under the sway largely of the French, including Schobert. He was also influenced to a degree by Michael Haydn, who

composed in many forms, including those of entertainment music. Johann Michael Haydn — to give him his full name — was five years younger than his famous brother. In 1762 he became concert-master and director at Salzburg, remaining there through most of the rest of his life, which ended in 1806. He had a fondness for the bottle, which may largely explain why one who was regarded by many as equally talented with his brother never achieved similar heights. Although Mozart and the younger Haydn did not get on too well together there seems to have been some affinity in certain important traits of character, particularly as they were reflected in music. Michael Haydn was lazy, but his works run into the customary, appallingly large number characteristic of the period. A large part of his music is for the church. But he also wrote pieces for the organ, sixty-six symphonies and *partiten*, serenades, marches, works for small groups of instruments and so forth. (The symphonies, of course, are not always symphonies in our meaning of the word.) Part II of the fourteenth volume of the "Denkmäler der Tonkunst in Österreich" contains music of the type I have been especially considering: two symphonies, a Turkish march, six minuets for orchestra, two divertimenti and a string quartet. (Next to nothing of Michael Haydn's music has been recorded.)

Now a few words about the forms with which we have to do here. It is unnecessary to define marches, waltzes and the various types of dances, except perhaps to throw out a warning that the German dance is not the same as the allemande of the French suite. For the rest, we have divertimenti, cassations, nocturnos and serenades. Whatever definitions we settle on for divertimento and cassation we may more or less apply to nocturno, a word especially employed by Michael Haydn and Mozart. The divertimento (or *divertissement* in French) is, in the pe-

riod we are considering, more or less equivalent to serenade or cassation, as the case may be. There is not, in fact, a sharp distinction made between cassation and serenade, although the difference is usually greatest here. In general and avoiding an attempt to draw fine lines we may say that the cassation is lighter, more given to wind instruments and more frequently designed for outdoor performances in the early days. Some etymologists derive its name, in fact, from the word "Gasse", German for street. As to which pieces were intended for outdoor performance and which indoors, we may make the general inference that the greater the reliance placed on wind instruments the more likely the performance was intended to be given outdoors.

Neither the forms that have been alluded to nor the general function of music as entertainment died out immediately with this period. Beethoven, as we know, wrote a huge quantity of such stuff, mostly of inferior quality. Often his works in this genre were frankly pot-boilers or — their equivalent in his case — music for occasion. In the case of later composers the words "serenade" and "divertissement" tend to lose some of the meaning hitherto ascribed to them. The single common continuing element is the presumed lightness of the music. Thus Brahms wrote two orchestral serenades (the minuet of the D major is played by the Philadelphia Orchestra under Stokowski on Victor 1720). Hugo Wolf wrote an *Italian Serenade* (there are several recordings of the string quartet version), and Volkmann, a German composer of the second rank in the last century, wrote several serenades for string orchestra (I find no evidence of any having been recorded). They are of a sentimental character, although not without charm. But the essential concept of music for diversion was dying out, to be revived only in our own day.

"SUCH SWEET COMPULSION"

GERALDINE FARRAR'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY

FRANCIS ROBINSON

"HER VOICE WAS LIKE HERSELF: BEAUTIFUL as a ray of sunshine." Thus did an eminent baritone describe a great American soprano. The compliment, as anyone who ever heard her sing will tell you, is not overlavish, for the object of Mr. De Gogorza's rare tribute is Geraldine Farrar. The story of one of the most glittering careers in all the years of opera is now available in the singer's own words. Her long-awaited autobiography, *Such Sweet Compulsion**, came from the Greystone Press October 27.

Miss Farrar's is not the usual set of prima donna memoirs, an autographed picture of Massenet notwithstanding. For all the readers of *Such Sweet Compulsion* might know, the animosities which seem to be part and parcel of a successful operatic career have vanished from the singer's mind, if indeed they ever existed at all. Even Maria Jeritza, who horned in during that last season on roles regarded as the American soprano's property, Miss Farrar lets pass with no more than a good-humored recollection of the Viennese thunderbolt flaunting "a well-cushioned and obvious posterior" in *Tosca*.

The rather florid title, stamped in a facsimile of Miss Farrar's handwriting on the purple cloth cover, comes from no less sturdy a source than the iambs of John Milton. It is quoted from his *Arcades*:

Such sweet compulsion doth in music lie
To lull the daughters of necessity
And keep unsteady Nature to her law
And the low world in measured motion draw
After the heavenly tune . . .

The first thing that strikes the reader is a unique device by which Miss Farrar allows her mother, of blessed memory, to act as prologue and chorus to the drama of her

life. The chapter divisions are titled, alternately, "The Mother" and "The Daughter" and the first line of the book reads: "I died in the beginning of 1923. That is, my spirit freed itself from its physical wrappings." In hands less skillful than Miss Farrar's, such a technique might degenerate into sentimental rot. The effect, for all the sincerity of feeling and purpose, might even become ludicrous. In the present case, however, it serves the narrator perfectly and Henrietta Barnes Farrar emerges a figure of towering strength and beauty.

From the time she was eighteen, when her only child was born, this Spartan woman devoted herself to the task of opening her daughter's lips and helping them find expression. Her pursuit of perfection was almost fanatic. Through the pages of *Such Sweet Compulsion* stride some of the greatest artists and personalities the world of music has ever known — Cosima Wagner, Richard Strauss, Lilli Lehmann, Enrico Caruso, Arturo Toscanini — but before none of these does Miss Farrar spread such palms as she reserves for the feet of her mother.

We go back with Miss Farrar to an idyll of New England childhood, a wholesome existence which, except for a priceless gift and a high ambition, was no different from that of her Melrose schoolmates. Singing at Sunday School, at the age of twelve impersonating Jenny Lind, the first piano all her own — these events led naturally and with no particular strain to auditions before the great in Boston and in New York. Nordica and Melba lent willing and sympathetic ears. The new star had begun its rise.

There was a loan from Mrs. Annie Webb for study abroad — a brave and exciting chapter. The good Boston woman had as collateral only the modest Farrar home property, the father's business, and the surety of the parent's good intentions to repay by an insurance, in Mrs. Webb's favor, on their

**Such Sweet Compulsion*, by Geraldine Farrar. The Greystone Press, New York. 1938. \$3.00.

daughter's life. Paris, Berlin, the financial stress of a career in its beginnings all conspired between the years of 1901 and 1906 to push the sum up to nearly \$30,000. After her unqualified and steady success at the Metropolitan following her debut there in 1906, Miss Farrar was able to repay her benefactress in full within three years. The itemized receipted statement is one of the proud illustrations of her autobiography.

Miss Farrar sang for the first time in grand opera at the Royal Opera House in Berlin in 1901 and her description of the brilliant pre-war capital provides a lively and fascinating chapter. Here her memories have every reason to be rose-colored. The Germans adored her and even today, although thirty years have passed and governments have come and gone, the name of "die Farrar" is still magic in the Reich. For a change, the Berliners saw in her a young and slender Marguerite, the maiden Goethe dreamed of. Furthermore, she refused to be bound by operatic "gestures" — those absurd movements about the stage which one critic pointedly classifies as A, B, C, and C minus. She could decline to wear the prescribed black or violet of a court in mourning because those colors were unbecoming to her — and get away with it. She could refuse to wear the long gloves demanded for palace concerts, preferring to show her beautifully chiseled elbow and forearm. She could do this because the Royal House of Germany, as well as its subjects, adored her — a fact which gave rise to gossip that was to plague her for years afterward. One couple, Miss Farrar relates, even applied to Lilli Lehmann wishing to adopt any one of the several semi-royal children the young singer was credited with having mothered.

The "sentimental interest" which the Crown Prince showed in the dark-haired prima donna even led some imprudent German periodicals to carry libelous stories. It was reported that the singer's father, Sid Farrar, a big league baseball player in his younger days, called around at one indiscreet Berlin editor's house "determined to avenge his daughter in the old-fashioned American way". The outraged parent, the report continued, forced his way into the journalist's house, dragged him out of bed, "and kicked him about the apartment until he begged for mercy". Despite this smear of gossip, the spirited young American remained a favorite with the Kaiser and the Kaiserin and the Crown Princess.

Her Berlin triumphs were repeated in Sweden, Poland, and Monte Carlo. It was on

the Riviera that she first sang with Caruso. She sang in *Le Roi de Lahore* and in the ballet of that production a sloe-eyed girl called Mata Hari danced for the first time. In Stockholm Farrar's suite was next to Isadora Duncan's. In Salzburg she worked with the indefatigable Lehmann and sang in the festival. This phenomenal singer and teacher, capable of singing *Traviata* and *Walküre* on consecutive nights, laid the cornerstone of the Mozarteum.

In Dresden at the première of *Salomé* Richard Strauss himself begged Farrar to create the role of Herod's daughter in Berlin. The composer even offered to alter his wickedly intricate score the better to suit her voice, adding candidly: "You Farrar, have such dramatic possibilities, can act and dance half-naked, so no one will care if you sing or not." Wisely, the young singer declined the role as she did at the Metropolitan several years later. Perhaps she deprived the world of a great operatic portrait of the savage *Salomé* but she knew full well that "a voiceless apparition on the stage of the Royal Opera, no matter how seductive, would soon — and rightly — have drawn forth fire and ire! and dismissal!" This was the girl who was to sing the first performance of *Königskinder*. The picture of her with her live geese was one of innocence and childlike grace.

With the Kaiser's permission, Miss Farrar returned in 1906 to her native land and to acclaim which, if anything, outdid her receptions abroad. In Europe again when the war broke out, she made the trip home on the same boat with Caruso, Gatti-Casazza, and other luminaries of the Metropolitan. The voyage began in the submarine-infested waters of the Mediterranean. During this uneasy lap of the journey Gatti remarked to his stellar soprano that if they should meet one of these sea monsters he relied upon her contacts in Berlin to insure them considerate treatment.

A whole chapter goes to Miss Farrar's adventures in Hollywood, the film capital which remains now as then a wild and woolly artistic frontier. Someday we shall see revivals of the *Carmen* and *Joan of Arc* which Farrar put on celluloid. DeMille was her director and Wallace Reid her leading man. The Hollywood period in Miss Farrar's life coincides with the years of her unfortunate marriage to Lou Tellegen. She treats the whole incident — man and marriage — with dignity and restraint. She lets it be known, however, that he of the classic profile and the trail of swooning feminine hearts

was the supreme cad. Awakened by reporters one night for a statement on his suicide, she received the news with: "I have nothing to say and am not interested."

The year 1922 brought her farewell to the Metropolitan. The roles she had mastered and was beloved for were legion — Tosca, Mimi, Nedda, Manon, Thais, Mignon, Juliet, Elisabeth. She had even wanted to do Sieglinde until Lilli Lehmann laughingly advised her that she had not enough meat on her bones to impersonate the Walsung bride and sister. Wagner's widow had fancied her as Eva. But the Metropolitan wished her to sing goodbye as Zaza — so the music hall Parisienne it was. That April afternoon saw a demonstration such as New York has given no singer before or since.

Her recollections of the ride home, the little family supper (taken in tears) with her father and mother, the painful weariness which seemed at that moment to envelop her, make an arresting psychological self-portrait set forth in some of the finest and most poignant writing of the book. Her father and mother, bound so closely to her by loyalty, pride, and affection, took their leave. She was alone.

"Slowly I sat down before the mirror in my boudoir," she recalls. "I was fagged out in body, but alert in mind . . . self-questioning . . . A suggestive touch was supplied incidentally by the masses of flowers, wreaths and banners that had figured in the afternoon's farewell. They lay about me, as if to honor a bier. A dissolution was near, perhaps, but in this sea of fading blossoms I could feel no sadness, no regret — only a wonder and a curiosity about myself." She was at the crossroads. There was still another journey to complete before the final leave-taking. It led through the concert field.

When Farrar came back to Carnegie Hall in 1927 she was the silver-haired and gracious lady we know today — still as attractive and alive and compelling as when she first stepped on the stage of Berlin's Royal Opera. Lieder recitals followed until 1931 and the last concert. The years since have been full and rich, too. Her retirement has shown the same flawless taste which marked the years of her career. There was the return to Europe — the first after the War — and a last embrace from Lehmann. When she visited Germany, the daughter of Wotan was gone. "The gods had received their own." The world which Farrar had held dear was changed but she was neither bitter nor overcome with sadness.



FARRAR AND HER MOTHER — ABOUT 1907

Back at Fairhaven, her Connecticut home, the story ends serenely on a Sunday morning of last July. There she is today in her big inviting house, surrounded by her dogs and her gardens.

It is difficult to be critical with Farrar. The memory of her, like her presence, is disarming. But her autobiography as it stands is inadequate. *Such Sweet Compulsion* may be the singer's own narrative of her life but it is far from the last word on Geraldine Farrar. It is extremely interesting to know that on a day in 1932, when, between the acts of *Parsifal* she spoke at the Metropolitan for the "Save the Opera" drive, she quoted the knowing and lovable old Master-singer, Hans Sachs:

Beware, for dark days are at hand
And threaten German fold and land . . .

One wishes she had included a complete list of her distinguished phonograph records with her estimate as to the merits of certain discs. She only touches lightly on her recording activities, telling us that "they went out over the country and served a wonderful purpose as advance réclame for later opera and concert tours, not to mention the generous royalties that accrued from their popular sales." What a priceless appendix the scripts she used as radio commentator for the Metropolitan Saturday matinees would

have made. There is much of the story yet to be told.

At the mature age of thirty-four Miss Farrar wrote her "first" autobiography. It was called *Geraldine Farrar: The Story of an American Singer, by Herself*. Twenty-two years later she offers *Such Sweet Compul-*

sion. Happily, it has those two most pronounced of Farrar qualities — grace and animation; and perhaps Miss Farrar is merely carrying out an artistic canon when she leaves us wishing for more. Nevertheless, let us hope that at the end of another twenty-two years or before she will give us a third book.

A PLEA FOR MORE GRAMOPHONE SOCIETIES

WILLIAM W. JOHNSON*

I BELIEVE I CAN SAFELY SAY THAT THE "society fever" has not gripped American gramophiles to the extent that it is now gripping recorded music lovers in England; although from time to time I have noted in the pages of *The American Music Lover* paragraphs which certainly indicate societies exist in the U. S. A. The editor, Mr. Reed, informs me that to his knowledge the society movement has never gained ground throughout the States, and little or no information from existent societies is passed on to others. In other words there is no federation of societies as there is in England.

About two years ago I described the formation of "The National Federation of Gramophone Societies" in the pages of *The Gramophone*, which occupies the same position in England as *The American Music Lover* does in America. Since then there have been many developments. Apart from the increasing scope of its work, this federation has put new life in the society movement, to the extent that the number of societies increased by no less than fifty per cent in twelve months. An even greater expansion is forecast for the coming season. Not only that — there has been called the first international convention of gramophone enthusiasts in history for November next. And interest is widespread. I hope to acquaint readers of *The American Music Lover* with the results of this conference in due course.

It is truly surprising how the work of the Federation has spread throughout the world.

*Founder and Chairman of the National Federation of Gramophone Societies.

We are in touch with societies in India, South Africa, Egypt, and Singapore; and the new Swedish society at Lund insisted on affiliating with us, thus threatening our title, which will have to be changed from National to International.

Recently it was my privilege to meet an American traveller, who is, as far as I can gather, one of the few enthusiasts in America having a private gramophone society of his own. I do not say he is the only one, but he is the first I have had the pleasure to meet. This was Mr. George C. Leslie of Maplewood, New Jersey.

It was most gratifying to us, the interest that this gentleman took in the society movement in England. In a way, I am given to understand, he was acting as an ambassador for *The American Music Lover*, the editors of which are most desirous of furthering the society movement in their country. Mr. Leslie made it a point to visit some of our societies during his stay in London. Besides spending an evening with one of the London societies, he twice came down to Gillingham in Kent to attend meetings of our local society. On his departure from England for Scandinavia, we were able to put him in touch with a new Swedish group, which in turn brought him into association with keen gramophiles in Denmark. I know he is anxious to see many more new societies in his own country, and when I suggested the establishment of a central organization to give the necessary stimulus to the venture, he said he would see what could be done about it. May I say at once, that if

our Federation can lend any assistance, it shall be given with great pleasure. The experience we have gained during the last two years is at the disposal of any reader of *The American Music Lover* who cares to write to me at 62, First Avenue, Gillingham, Kent, England.

It may be asked, what has the Federation already done, and what is it hoping to do? Four or five years ago, the remaining societies in this country (some of them over a quarter of a century old) were in danger of extinction. The Federation was formed at the right moment, for it not only preserved those groups in low waters, but was able to bring about the inauguration of many more. One new group deserves especial mention: it meets on Sundays in a Birmingham cinema, where is installed one of the finest amplifiers in the country. Over 90 members attended the first recital, and there are fears that during the coming season the cinema may prove too small for its audiences.

The Federation has established an information bureau and a panel of lecturers. It encourages the interchange of visits between neighboring societies. It publishes two pages of news and reports each month in the Journal, *The Gramophone*, to which it gives full support. One of the objectives of the convention is to establish a National Library of Recorded Music for the benefit of all students of music. Another is to investigate possibilities of the foundation of a Record Club, to be run on Book Club lines — that is, subscribers will receive one record each month at a greatly reduced price.

In America, as over here, there must be many gramophiles who anxiously await recordings of works hitherto unrecorded or unsatisfactorily recorded, and at the same time deplore the issue of works already well represented in the catalogues. The Federation is at present compiling a list of music which, in the opinion of the societies, is long overdue for recording. In due course this will be placed before the manufacturers, and will have the full backing of the society movement and the Federation. By such means, it is hoped and believed that the companies will respond.

The society movement has so many advantages that no enthusiast can afford to overlook them. Apart from the pleasure of hearing the records of other enthusiasts on other reproducers, and in varying conditions and circumstances, there is the unique opportunity for discussion, for admiration and criticism of the music heard. As a result, one

accumulates not only a deeper but a wider knowledge of music. The society enthusiast cannot help possessing a large listening repertoire: often he hears works of which he knows nothing; sometimes he hears afresh music he hitherto disliked, and discovers his earlier opinion was made hastily. And so on.

The time is surely coming when gramophone societies will be found in all the large towns and cities of America. Perhaps everyone is waiting for someone to set the wheels in motion! From what Mr. Leslie has said, the editors of *The American Music Lover* will be more than glad to cooperate, as will that gentleman himself.

The Library Shelf

THE ORCHESTRA SPEAKS, by Bernard Shore.
New York: Longmans, Green & Co. \$2.50.

■ Fabulous stories are told about orchestral leaders, many of which gain credence without factual foundation. Traits of character, idiosyncrasies and purported musical opinions, much too few of which have any basis in fact, are spread about promiscuously. Possibly some facts lie behind tall stories of celebrities, but too many are widely altered in the retelling. Drop a pebble in a pool and the water rings formed will gradually spread and distort themselves. Drop a remark about a celebrity in the musical world and it will be similarly spread and distorted. The man behind the scenes is in the best position to give us facts about a musical leader, but unfortunately he is not too often heard from. And, of course, if the man behind the scenes feels he has a job to protect, he will naturally choose his words.

A first desk man in a large orchestra should be able to allot the generals of the baton their proper ranking. If he has judgment such a man, provided of course he is a first-rate musician, can very well give us an insight into the personalities of great conductors that we may never otherwise know. Mr. Shore, the viola leader in the British Broadcasting Company Orchestra, proves to be such a man, and though he offers no personal critical comments, he presents the various leaders in a revealing manner. Realistic and vital are his sketches of the great conductors, particularly at rehearsals when their inner character is most

fully revealed. But although Mr. Shore is not deprecatory in the personal sense, his factual accounts reveal many traits that may well leave the reader critical of some conductors.

There are, generally speaking, two types of conductors: those who approach music with deference and respect for the composer's directions, and those who inevitably feel it their duty to "right" the composer. Mr. Shore presents facts by means of which one can easily pigeon-hole each conductor. Almost all conductors amend composers' ideas; even Toscanini, who has been called a purist, does this, as Mr. Shore proves in his chapter on the Italian maestro. The book covers among others, Beecham, Toscanini, Mengelberg, Goossens, Coates, Wood, Barbirolli and Boult. The record buyer who knows all these men through their records will find Mr. Shore's book most interesting reading.

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THE MACMILLAN ENCYCLOPEDIA OF MUSIC AND MUSICIANS, In One Volume. Edited by Albert W. Wier. 2089pp. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1938. \$10.00.

■ This is the largest reference work on music and musicians ever published in one volume. The aim of the book, according to its editor, "has been to fill the modern need for a comprehensive, up-to-date, ready-reference work on music and musicians. Every effort has been made to include essential information on all matters, directly or indirectly connected with the art of music, that have interest for the professional musician, teacher, writer, student, concert-goer, radio listener and record enthusiast."

There are a number of new and valuable features in this work. For example, synopses of the plots of well known operas are given; and famous instrumental works are briefly discussed under their titles. The inquiring reader will find much useful information here about living composers, interpreters and writers on music many of whom have never, to our knowledge, appeared in a reference work before.

In a book of this sort omissions are inevitable. One could hardly expect, for instance, that a one-volume encyclopedia would include complete lists of compositions for every composer. Yet, though the editor says "each article is confined to pertinent facts concerning its subject," many facts that seem pertinent to the reader are absent. Thus, to name only a few of such omissions, Hermann Abert is mentioned but

his most important work — the monumental biography of Mozart — is not. Heinrich Schenker is listed, but his important works on harmony and counterpoint are omitted from the lists of books on those subjects. Under "Clarinet Quintet" we find the Brahms work but not the Mozart nor the Bliss. Several of the articles contain inaccuracies, and some musicians who passed away several years ago are still listed as among the living. Presumably future editions will clear up such things as well as a disconcerting number of unfortunate typographical errors.

The book is printed in large, clear type and is sturdily bound.

Overtones

(Continued from Page 245)

DVORAK: *Serenade*, Op. 22; Berlin Phil. Orch., Dir. Hans von Benda. Telefunken E2650-52.

LOWE: *Der Nöck*; Heinrich Schlusnus. Polydor 67213.

France

MOZART: *Piano Concerto in C mi.*, K. 491; Robert Casadesus and Orchestre Symphonique. Dir. Eugene Bigot. Fr. Col. LFX543-6.

HAHN: *L'enamourée*, and *L'heure exquise* (Pathé PG89). HAHN: *Etudes latines - Phyllis*, and PALADILHE: *Psyche* (Pathé PG88). Sung by Endrèze.

PAISIELLO: *Lode al ciel*; and PARADIES: *Quel ruscelletto*. (Pathé PG87). PASQUINI: *Ermina in Riva del Giordano*, and SCARLATTI: *Si, si, fedel*, and CALDARA: *Come raggio di sol* (Pathé PG83). MONTEVERDI: *Orfeo, Recitativo Act 3 - Ah! sventurato amante; Recitativo Act 2 - Orfeo's Plaint*; and *Air Act 4 - Quel'onore* (Pathé Pat 76). Sung by Yvon le Marc'Hardour.

PIERNE: *L'eccentrique*, and *Le numéro espagnol* (piano); Maria-Antonia de Castro. Pathé PA1308.

VICTORIA: *4e Responsorio du Mercredi-Saint*. La Musique au Vatiean, discs 1113-5.

VICTORIA: *Tenebrae factae sunt*; and PALESTRINA: *Super flamina Babylonis*. La Musique au Vatican, disc 1156.

VICTORIA: *Caligaverunt*; and PALESTRINA: *Laudate Dominum*. La Musique au Vatican, disc 1157. By the Sistine Choir.

MILHAUD: *Suite Provencale*; Grande Orchestra, Dir. Roger Desormière. Le Chant du Monde, discs 516-7.

Overtones

Foreign Releases This Month

English

ROSSINI: *Overture, La Scala di Seta*; B. B. C. Orchestra, Dir. Toscanini. HMV — DB3541.

RUESAGER: *Suite - Fool's Paradise*; and *Marche Tartare*; Copenhagen Philharmonic Orchestra, Dir. T. Jensen. HMV—Z250.

WAGNER: *Tannhäuser - Grand March*; Beecham and L. P. Orch. Col. LX733.

GLAZOUNOV: *Troubadour's Serenade*; and MOSSOLOV: *Steel Foundry*; E. I. R. A. Sym. Orch., Turin, Dir. de Sabata. Parlophone E11374.

BRAHMS: *Variations and Fugue on a Theme by Handel*; Egon Petri. Col. LX734-6.

CHOPIN: *Ballade in F major, Op. 38, No. 2*; Anatole Kitain. Col. DX874.

BEETHOVEN: *Sonata in C minor, Op. 111*; W. Backhaus. HMV—DB3218-20.

HANDEL: *Concerto in D minor*, Danish Quartet. HMV—DB5218.

RUESAGER: *Serenade*; Danish Trio. HMV—DB5205.

SCHUBERT: *Sonata in A minor*; Feuermann and Gerald Moore. Col. LFX536-8.

German

WAGNER: *Die Meistersinger* - Act 3 (complete); Die Sächsische Staatskapelle. Der Chor der Dresdener Staatssoper, Dir. Karl Böhm. Sachs; Hans Hermann Nissen; Pogner; Sven Nilssen; Walther; Torsten Ralf; Eva; Margarete Teschemacher. HMV — DB4562-76.

WEBER: *Der Freischütz - Overture*; Die Sächsische Staatskapelle, Dir. Böhm. HMV —DB4561.

HANDEL: *Concerto Grosso in D, Op. 6, No. 5*; Diener and his Collegium musicum. HMV — EH1202.

MOZART: *Violinkonzert in A-dur, K. 219*; Jan Dahmen and Der Sächsische Staatskapelle. HMV — DB4578-81.

BEETHOVEN: *Sym. No. 9*; Hamburg Philhar. Orch., Dir. Eugen Jochum. Telefunken SK2615-23.

BIZET: *L'Arlesienne Suite No. 1*; Berlin Phil. Orch., Dir. Carl Schuricht. Telefunken E-1850-1.

(Continued on Previous Page)

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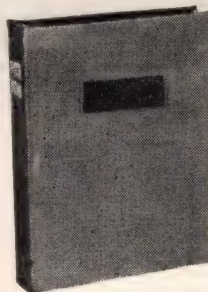
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Editorial

■ "WHY SO MANY TRANSCRIPTIONS?" WRITES a correspondent. "Don't the companies know that a lot of fine music is still unrecorded? Bastard music should not be perpetuated on records; and most of the arranged music is no more nor less than just this—a distortion of the composer's true intentions. In the past year Victor has issued no less than 38 transcriptions, only a few of which can be said to improve upon the composer's original intentions."

We have had so many similar protests that we feel a word or two about transcriptions would not be amiss. To write a brief for or against them would take more space than we can give to it here, but at the outset let us agree that there is room for complaint against the deluge of transcriptions that have emerged from all recording companies. Some are less guilty than others, but Victor is by no means the worst offender in this; if one follows the European releases one will find that transcriptions abound there too.

Strictly speaking it is generally the purist who resents transcriptions. However, there are many others who dislike them. A large part of the music loving public has grown more discerning in the past few years; surfeited by transcriptions on the radio, that part of the public has turned to records for the real thing. Confronted with a large amount of arranged music in this field, such music lovers have naturally been moved to protest. Now, in our opinion, not all of these protests are justifiable by any means, but a goodly proportion certainly are. The formation in recent years of a record company whose avowed intention was to avoid transcriptions has had its effect. The literature that this company has put forth has not been glowingly written in the Hollywood manner; it has been instead purely factual, often, indeed, academic and dry. That the record buying public has been impressed with the aims of this company is proved by the fact that its first year in business paid for itself. A short time ago this could not have happened. The mistakes of the large companies, however, become the profits of the smaller ones. This sort of thing happens over and over again in the business world when a powerful organization becomes so chauvinistic in its viewpoint that it believes it can do no

wrong, and that everything that bears its label, because of its position of power, should be accepted uncomplainingly.

To return to the case presented by our correspondent. We think he does RCA Victor an injustice. Admittedly 38 transcriptions sound like a great many in a year, but has our correspondent, or for that matter any of our correspondents who have similarly protested in the past year, considered the large output of authentic recordings put forth by this company in that time? The balance of the scale is surely in Victor's favor. There is another side, mentioned by several readers, which is not to be ignored. Those who are supreme in power have a trust imposed upon them by the general public, and it is their inescapable duty to consider that trust. Bastard art may appeal to a large part of the general public, but as that public becomes more and more aware of the real thing it will resent and turn away from the false. The complaints against transcribed music are by no means entirely out of order; they are the direct result of the fine work that the large companies produce. These complaints were inevitable, and the fact that they are only partly justifiable should not deter those to whom they are addressed from heeding them. The public will drink skimmed milk for a long time, but let it once taste Grade A milk and cream, and it will demand more and more of the latter. And a good part of that public will never be able to return to the skimmed milk. In such manner does the true music lover advance; and it goes without saying that his influence will be felt.

Correspondence

To the Editor of *The American Music Lover*.

Dear Mr. Reed:

The *American Music Lover* gets better all the time. Brewster's article, *The Musical Comics* was excellent reading. He touched the high spots, all right, but I wish he had a better acquaintance with Joseph Holbrooke and Lord Berners. They are exquisitely funny. The latter's *Fugue* 1924 is a riot. Holbrooke's scores are as funny to scan as his music is to hear, but the same might be said of Berners' too, for that matter.

Among the Americans, Deems Taylor got off a funny bit in *Circus Days* — the elephant episode — and Philip James' *Station WGBX* still has us laughing at the memory of hearing it. The Philip James thing was so funny that the audience in Carnegie Hall guffawed. But the funniest thing I ever heard in music was one of those Moszkowski things as paraphrased by Skalski in one of his maliciously mischievous moods. Side-splitting!

Sincerely,

A. J. F.

Richmond Hill, L. I. October 6, 1938.

RECORDED PIANO MUSIC OF BRAHMS

(Continued from Page 234)

suggestive of parts of the third symphony. Erdmann's recording is perhaps more spacious than Backhaus', and deserves a better record pressing. During the summer of 1892 Brahms wrote the last two *opera* for piano. Opus 118 is found intact in Victor album M-202 by Backhaus. The second and third numbers, *Intermezzo in A* and *Ballade in G minor*, are duplicated very competently by Eileen Joyce. The final *Intermezzo in E flat minor* is a condensed tragedy; it is perhaps Brahms' best short piano piece.

The three *Intermezzi* and a *Rhapsodie* comprising Opus 119 are of diverse types. The first two are to be had on Victor disc 14134 played by Backhaus. No. 3 in *C major* is so typically pianistic that none of the many recordings has succeeded in capturing its elfin lightness and grace. The *E flat Rhapsody* is orchestral, very difficult to play at the requisite speed without losing something of its inherent weight and sombreness. It has been recorded by Ney, Moiseievitch. Murdock and Joyce. All were compared except Elly Ney's. Joyce best captures the rhapsodic mood.

Piano students and pedagogues are gradually losing their prejudice against records and the fear that their use for study purposes will entail loss of prestige. There is no medium of instruction more valuable if

properly employed; and the works of few composers may be so easily studied in this manner as those of Brahms.

AMONG THOSE PRESENT

V. G. Brewsaugh (p. 232), is a well known radio lecturer and teacher in Wisconsin.

Moses Smith (p. 235), is a leading Boston music critic, who inherited H. T. Parker's post on The Evening Transcript.

Francis Robinson (p. 239), has been music critic and editor of the Sunday Magazine section of the Nashville Banner for a number of years.

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Record Notes and Reviews

Orchestra

DEBUSSY: *Nocturnes - Nuages, Fetes, Sirènes* (7 sides); and DEBUSSY: *Fanfare* and DUKAS: *Fanfare* (1 side); played by the Orchestre des Festivals Debussy, direction of D. E. Inghelbrecht. Columbia set 344, four discs, price \$6.00.

■ Made several years ago in Paris by Pathé, apparently in connection with a Debussy festival about which we have no specific information, these recordings are undoubtedly the best in existence of the *Nocturnes*. The delicacy of coloring, the sensitive, evasive and highly subtle character of these pieces, has never been fully captured in a recording. The exquisitely shimmering orchestral texture of *Nuages* and *Sirènes* demands a type of control monitoring which it is very doubtful any recording engineer may ever adequately accomplish. Inghelbrecht, a talented composer himself and a close friend of the composer, gives the most sensitive readings of these elusive pieces issued to date on discs. That they are not entirely satisfactory cannot be blamed on him; it is quite evident that he is not leading an orchestra of the first rank, and the men are not always with him. This is particularly noticeable in the beginning of *Fetes*. Although the recording conveys more of the lights and shadows of the scores, and the gradations between *piano* and *pianissimo*, if not completely realized, are better than in any other recording, the louder passages are deficient. Again this is particularly noticeable in the climax of *Fetes*, which the conductor effectively plans. Probably the gradations of tone would have been bettered had the recording chamber been more "alive".

Sorabji, the Hindu critic of London says that *Nuages* and *Sirènes* own an Oriental texture. "The curious little, wailing wisps of melody in *Nuages*," he writes, and the whole of the motives sung by the wordless chorus in the lovely *Sirènes* . . . show very plainly their Asiatic affinities and sympathies." The performances here of these two works are particularly ingratiating.

The two *Fanfares* for brass and percussion accredited to Debussy and Dukas, are an entirely incongruous filler-in to this set. I can-

not imagine anyone wishing to play them after the exquisite delicacy of *Sirènes*.

The recording is arranged: *Nuages* - disc 69315D; *Fetes* - disc 69316D, and *Sirènes* and *Fanfares* - discs 69317-18D.

—P. H. R.

BEETHOVEN: *Symphony No. 5 in C minor, Opus 67*; played by the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, direction of Wilhelm Furtwängler. Victor Set M-426, 9 sides, price \$9.00.

■ Furtwängler has long been highly regarded for his interpretations of Beethoven's *Fifth Symphony* and Brahms' *First*. In all the years that I have been attending concerts I have no memory of a performance of the Brahms work that excels the one I once heard Furtwängler give. His reading of the famous *Fifth* shows his remarkable insight into the music, and his extraordinary gifts for orchestral precision and ease in rhythmic manipulation. I do not know when I have ever heard the Berlin Philharmonic sound better than it does in this set, and since reports say the orchestra is not at present as fine an organization as it was a few years back, it only goes to show what a truly great conductor can get from an orchestra when he sets out to do it.

With all the fine orchestral playing here, and the conductor's amazing ability to bring out the inner voices of the music, his reading of the *Fifth* lacks the spontaneity and exuberance of the Weingartner recording. The playing at times is somewhat precious! But despite this criticism this performance deserves to be regarded as one of the great readings of a Beethoven symphony to be had on records. A first hearing may not impress as it should, for the attenuated *pianissimos* that the conductor makes, and has demanded to be included in the recording, are so seldom heard on records that we are very apt to forget that they are heard in the concert hall. Furtwängler builds his drama with intensity but not with pomposity. Because of this the recording may be considered to be on the subdued side, but on a really good machine the reproduction will be found to be completely adequate.

—P. H. R.

DE FALLA: *Three Cornered Hat - Dances*; played by the Boston "Pops" Orchestra, direction of Arthur Fiedler. Victor Set M-505, two 10-inch discs, price \$2.50.

■ The gay and colorful dances from Falla's ballet, *El Sombrero de Tres Picos*, are here given a resounding performance by the ever-dependable Fiedler and his brilliant orchestra. They have been recorded with the expansiveness with which the Victor engineers usually favor this organization. I liked especially the *Miller's Dance* and the kaleidoscopic finale, and I think my neighbors liked them too.

With music of this kind, in which the orchestration is so important an element, first-rate reproduction is an absolute necessity. For this reason the present set may be considered to supersede the older recordings of this music.

—N. B.

DELIBES: *Sylvia - Ballet Excerpts - Prelude, Valse Lente*; and *Coppelia - Ballet Excerpts - Thème Slav varié, Csardas*; played by the London Philharmonic Orchestra, direction Efreim Kurtz. Columbia disc 69323D, price \$1.50.

■ Ballet excerpts well played and recorded; obviously arranged for the use of dancers with their precision and rubato.

—P. G.

DVORAK: *String Serenade in E*; played by Boyd Neel String Orchestra. English Decca Nos. X214-7, price \$8.00.

■ There is a naiveté and a freshness of youth in this pleasing music, written in the composer's thirty-fourth year. The music is luminous and filled with the breath of Spring. It is not great music, but music of sunny gladness and glowing happiness, without a shadow, the sort of thing that gladdens the heart when one is tired or depressed. It offers no problems to the listener; the shaping of the music is simple and completely artless. The work is divided: *Moderato*, *Waltz*, *Scherzo*, *Larghetto*, and *Allegro vivace*.

Neel and his string orchestra are represented here with a round, full string tone. The conductor does well by the score, but the same criticism that has been made before about his playing can be advanced here: there is a lack of the variety in bowing which is so essential to fine string playing.

The smooth, quiet surface of the English discs are a welcome relief from the sand and gravel tracks of domestic Decca recordings.

—P. H. R.

FOLK DANCES FROM MANY LANDS: *Scandinavian Dance - Rospiggspolska*; *Swedish Schottische* and *Toast to King Gustav* (10-inch Columbia disc 391-M). *Danish - Hattemageren*; and *Dutch - Terschelling Reels Nos. 1 and 2*. (10-inch Columbia disc 392-M). Price 75c each. All played by the Folk Dance Orchestra, director of Victor Olaf.

■ Columbia adds two more recordings to its worthy group of folk dances. The present group was collected by *The Ling Association*. The recording is quite satisfactory.

—P. G.

MAHLER: *Adagietto from Symphony No. 5 in C minor*; played by the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, direction Bruno Walter. Victor disc 12319, price \$1.50.

■ This *Adagietto* from Mahler's ponderous and gargantuan *Fifth Symphony* owns a note of reflective sadness. It is tender, almost tearful in its emotion, but not morbid. Divorced from the symphony, its expressive simplicity is considerably strengthened. There are many movements in the symphonies of both Mahler and Bruckner that gain immeasurably by being played alone.

This recording may well become a collectors' item, for it is a heartfelt and moving farewell item from Bruno Walter and the Vienna Philharmonic, a famous orchestra that both he and Mahler helped to mold.

—P. H. R.

HOLST: *St. Paul's Suite*; played by the Jacques String Orchestra. Columbia discs 17113-4D, ten-inch, price \$1.00 each.

■ According to *The Gramophone* Mr. Jacques "came to London a few years ago from Oxford, where his work in Bachian and other activities had been well proved." His Bachian work seems to have stood him in good stead, for he leads with a firm hand and with requisite assurance for accurate outlining of contrapuntal lines. There is a healthy exuberance to his orchestra's playing, particularly suitable to this folk-modal, British music. Holst wrote this suite when he was music-master at St. Paul's Girls'

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Dances (Manuel De Falla),
played by the Boston "Pops",
Orchestra, Arthur Fiedler,
Conductor. Album M-505,
4 sides, \$2.50.



Victrola

AND RADIO ENTERTAINMENT

School, I believe for the use of the school orchestra; anyway that is the origin of its name.

The suite contains four numbers, a jolly, well-constructed Jig and an ingeniously cross-rhythmed Ostinato (disc 17113D), a contrasting Intermezzo and a jig-like finale based on a folk tune called the *Dargason* with which he has combined the old English folk tune, *Green Sleeves*. This latter number recalls dancing on the green, the gaiety and jollity of an English folk dance festival.

I like the bite that this group gets into its playing, it sets forth the music better than an earlier recording made by Neel and his orchestra, and the recording here is much better than the previous one.

—P. H. R.

MASSANET: *Le Cid - Ballet Excerpts*; played by Grande Orchestre Symphonique, direction of F. Ruhlmann. Columbia discs 17116-17D, 10-inch, price \$1.00 each.

■ Massenet, in writing the ballet music for his opera founded upon the Spanish hero — the Cid, naturally turned to various Spanish dance forms. Some of these pieces have become favorites with students of the piano, and are often found in amateur recital programs. In their original instrumental dress, they are far more effective, however, and since they are popular with a large audience it is appropriate that they should be so recorded. Ruhlmann, a leading conductor of the Paris Opéra, gives a good account of them here. The recording, emanating from the Pathé studios, is good but not outstanding.

—P. G.

MOZART: *Rondo in D major*, K. 382; played by Edwin Fischer and his Chamber Orchestra. Victor disc 15185, price \$2.00.

■ Mozart wrote this fugue for two claviers in 1783. In 1788 he arranged the fugue for stringed instruments prefacing it with the noble and richly expressive *Adagio*. The *Fugue* is not as interesting when played on two pianos as it is when played by a body of strings, particularly one of chamber orchestra dimensions; hence it is fitting that this work has been recorded by Busch and his chamber players, who give it an earnest and fervent performance. The recording is splendidly realized.

—P. H. R.

MOZART: *Symphony No. 32**, in B flat major, K. 319; played by Edwin Fischer and his Chamber Orchestra. Victor set M-479, three discs, price \$6.50.

MOZART: *Symphony No. 28*, in C major, K. 200, played by the Berlin College of Instrumentalists, direction of Fritz Stein. Victor set M-502, two discs, price \$3.50.

■ These symphonies are both early works, though they are separated by six years — a long time in the rich but tragically brief period of Mozart's creative activity. Both were written in Salzburg, the C major in 1773 and the B flat major in 1779, after the composer's return from Mannheim and Paris.

K. 200 precedes chronologically the symphonies in G minor, K. 183 and A major, K. 201, both recently issued by Columbia. While it lacks the dramatic intensity of the G minor and the almost mature beauty of the A major, this little symphony in C has a charm of its own. It is marked by the light, sure touch of the composer, which is demonstrated especially in the delicate handling of the wind-instruments. Formally the work represents an early stage in the development of the symphony; yet each of its four movements has its points of interest. Such, for example, are the echos in the horns in the minuet, and the brief codas attached to the other three movements.

The *Symphony in B flat* is built on a larger scale and points towards the great works of the Vienna period. It consisted originally of only three movements but Mozart added the minuet after his arrival in Vienna. The symphony is predominantly gay. In the development section of the lively first movement we hear the four notes — a favorite phrase of Mozart's — which were later to begin the finale of the "*Jupiter*" *Symphony*. Especially striking in the songful slow movement is a passage in imitation for the strings, repeated by the woodwinds. Abert has pointed out the resemblance between the subject of the trio of the minuet and a theme in Schubert's *Impromptu in A flat*, Op. 90, No. 4. The finale is a brilliant movement in the rhythm of a *tarantella*.

The performance of K. 319 is precise, well balanced, and full of verve. The difficult finale especially receives a polished and

*The numbers usually attached to the Mozart symphonies are those of the Breitkopf and Härtel Collected Edition, which are in turn based on the old Köchel catalogue. These numbers bear little relation to the actual chronological sequence of the works in question; but since they facilitate reference to the published scores, it may be well to point out that K. 319 is really No. 33 in the Breitkopf series.

spirited reading. The Fischer ensemble seems to be a well trained group. This symphony occupies five sides; the last side contains the familiar *Air* from Bach's *Suite No. 3*. The other set also offers a performance that is praiseworthy, if not quite as expert as that of the Fischer orchestra. Both symphonies are well recorded.

—N. B.

MOZART: *The Magic Flute - Overture*; played by the B. B. C. Symphony Orchestra, direction of Arturo Toscanini. Victor disc No. 15190, price \$2.00.

■ This overture, in the opinion of many Mozart's finest, now receives its greatest performance under the baton of the incredible Toscanini. No matter how often we hear this conductor, each fresh reading brings back his familiar virtues with the impact of new miracles. Not the least of these miracles is the supreme clarity of his orchestra, which allows us to hear things we never heard before in familiar compositions. Here the golden tone of the brass in the famous chords, the beautifully molded phrases of the unhurried woodwinds above an electric basic rhythm, the crisp precision of the strings express everything written and implied in Mozart's score in a manner that throws new light on the overture. The recording is very good. This disc belongs in every record library.

—N. B.

MOZART: *Overture in B flat major, K. 311a* — *Anh. 8*; played by Paris Conservatory Orchestra, direction Edward Fendler. Victor disc 12327, price \$1.50.

■ This is the same overture that Columbia recently put forward as the *Overture — Paris*, played by Alfred Wallenstein and his Sinfonietta. The authenticity of the score as it stands has been questioned, as it was lost from the time of its first performance in 1778 until the early part of this century. Some authorities state that the opening section of the work is similar to a movement in a Gossec symphony; certainly it is not characteristic of Mozart. The score is attractive, however, and the latter part of it definitely owns the Mozartean imprint.

Wallenstein gave a more zestful performance of the work, but his recording was acoustically dead. Here we have a spaciousness in the recording and a roundness of tone which makes Mr. Fendler's version greatly preferable.

—P. H. R.

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RIMSKY-KORSAKOW: *Le Coq d'or* (Four Musical Pictures from the Opera) played by the London Symphony Orchestra, direction Eugene Goossens. Victor set M-504, three discs, price \$5.00.

■ Rimsky-Korsakow was adept at portraying fantastic elements in music; his two best known orchestral scores, *Scheherezade* and the symphony *Antar*, are based on fantasy. In arranging an orchestral suite from his three-act opera, *The Golden Cockerel*, the composer emphasized the fantastic elements of the score, and, as one writer has said, the better saved from oblivion the charming music of an opera that suffers from confused symbolism. *Le Coq d'or* was the composer's last dramatic work. It was completed in 1907, the year before his death. Based on a fairy tale of Pushkin, its plot is a confused one, but musically the opera is one of Rimsky-Korsakow's most attractive. Here his subtle and exquisite craftsmanship is evidenced with discriminating artistry, and his ability to outline a character in a few notes is further attested. His refined and colorful orchestration is of course one of the chief delights of the score.

The suite is divided into four movements: Part 1 contains the Prelude of the opera and the Prologue, the slumber scene of King Dodon, the crowing of the cock and the uproar that follows, and the return of the slumber scene; Part 2, the short Prelude to Act 2, and the beginning of the first scene with cuts up to just before the Queen's entrance; Part 3, the Dance of Dodon and the Queen and the subsequent music to the close of the act with cuts; Part 4, the Prelude to Act 3, the passage leading to the first scene, then the Entrance Dance, the death of Dodon, and the close of the opera following the Epilogue. The score is not an operatic medley but a cleverly devised suite well suited to the concert hall.

Goossens gives an appropriately sparkling performance of this music, and the recording does him justice. An admirable musician. Goossens deserves to be heard oftener on records. I, for one, would recommend a symphonic recording from him, or a re-recording of Bax's *Tintagel*, or better still another Bax tone-poem.

—P. H. R.

SCHUBERT: *Rosamunde - Incidental Music - Overture: Shepherd's Melody; Entr'actes Nos. 1, 2, 3; Ballet Music Nos. 1 and 2*; played by the Hallé Orchestra, direction of

Sir Hamilton Harty. Columbia set 343, four discs, price \$6.00.

■ Hamilton Harty has not been heard from in a long time on records; he was once one of the foremost recording conductors. Dating from at least 1930, these discs are not really "dated" today. For some unaccountable reason they were not released in this country before this, and, since music lovers have been requesting their issue here, Columbia has seen fit to put them forward.

Rosamunde, Princess of Cyprus, was a dramatic work by von Chezy, who wrote the libretto of Weber's *Euryanthe*. It was presented in 1823, and withdrawn after two performances. Schubert is said to have written his delightful incidental music for this play in five days. "The score and parts were tied up and hidden away in a dusty cupboard, there to await," Duncan tells us, "their deliverance at the hands of two devoted English travellers, who later unearthed the treasure . . ." Those two travellers were Sir George Grove (of dictionary fame) and Sir Arthur Sullivan. This was in the autumn of 1867. The endearing charm of this music does not need to be enlarged upon here. Harty conveys it with his usual poised musicianship, imagination and spontaneity. Undoubtedly more modern recording might do greater justice to his performances (the gradations of tone here are not too finely drawn); still the pleasure to be derived from these discs cannot be minimized.

—P. H. R.

SIBELIUS: *Symphony No. 5 in E flat major, Opus 82* (7 sides); and *Pohjola's Daughter, Opus 49* (3 sides); played by the Boston Symphony Orchestra, direction Serge Koussevitzky. Victor set M-474, price \$10.

■ In the past few months Victor has issued several orchestral sets, among which this should be counted, that would seem to indicate a new development in the recording of the orchestra. The reproduction of the music here is elevatingly life-like. The range of dynamics is equitably presented, and the tonal quality is remarkable in both its clarity and verity of instrumental timbre. One suspects that some study of the acoustical characteristics of the concert hall has led to the new lucidity in orchestral recording. In the reproduction of the orchestra Victor is certainly far ahead of its affiliate, the National Broadcasting Company. It is not reproduction alone, however, that thrills one in this set, but performance also, for Koussevitzky's eloquence reveals many new val-

ues in the music. In both works his more vital and persuasive talents transcend the readings of the late Kajanus in the first Sibelius Society issue. One wishes that Koussevitzky had also remade *Tapiola*, one of Sibelius' most compelling scores.

The greatness of Sibelius' *Fifth* might be said to lie in its economy of orchestration. What Sibelius does with relatively few instruments only the musician and student of orchestration can fully appreciate. It has been said of this symphony that it owns parts which are nearer to Beethoven than any other work of its composer. Epic in character, bolder and more completely objective than its predecessor, its popularity with the concert-goer is somewhat bewildering when we consider that the work does not own a single sensuous phrase nor even a slow movement in the accepted sense of the word. The shaping of the score in the listener's mind is not difficult, for it is based on simple but positive melodies which, Tovey says, are "severely logical in origin and consequence". The middle movement of the work is an interesting treatment of the variation form, being based not on an actual theme but on a rhythm. Much has been written about the noble finale of this symphony, which unquestionably summarizes the general disposition of the work. Sibelius' pupil and friend, de Törne, says it is "an impressive ode to the courage and perseverance of man."

Pohjola's Daughter does not rank with the symphony. It is descriptive music, one of the composer's lesser scores, definitely based on a program. It is the sort of thing that Saint-Saëns was fond of fashioning, except that Sibelius never descends to the saccharine writing that the Frenchman was guilty of. Koussevitzky apparently has a predilection for the score, for he often plays it, and it must be said he gives it a rarely definitive utterance.

—P. H. R.

WEBER: *Invitation to the Waltz*, Opus 65: played by the Philadelphia Orchestra, direction of Leopold Stokowski. Victor disc 15189, price \$2.00.

■ Originally a piano piece. Weber's *Invitation to the Waltz* is better known in the Berlioz orchestration, although the Weingartner arrangement with its combined themes in the latter half is a more ingenious transcription. Widely played, this music, with its lilting melodies, has a ready-made appeal. Stokowski recorded the waltz almost a decade ago, and, since it was a wide favorite, we are certain that many will welcome his glowing up-to-date re-recording of it.

—P. G.

Concerto

BOCCHERINI: *Concerto in B flat major* (for cello and orchestra); played by Pablo Casals and the London Symphony Orchestra, direction of Sir Landon Ronald. Victor set M-381, three discs, price \$6.50.

■ In recent reviews in our pages Mr. Miller has excellently set forth the case for Boccherini. He was overshadowed by his contemporary Haydn, but by no means eclipsed. Burney, the celebrated 18th-century historian spoke highly of his music. Boccherini belonged to his century, and when we listen to his music today it is well to think of him in relation to his times.

This concerto has been described as of an anecdotal character. It is gaily melodious and free from padding. It is a vehicle which a great artist alone can make interesting, and

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this Casals does. He brings to it all the tonal expression and strength necessary for an enjoyable performance. And the late Sir Landon Ronald has provided him with a fine orchestral background. The recording is good. —P. G.

MOZART: *Concerto in E flat, K. 365* (for two pianos); played by Artur and Karl Schnabel with London Symphony Orchestra, direction Adrian Boult. Victor set M-484, four discs, price \$8.00.

MOZART: *Concerto in G major, K. 453*; played by Edwin Fischer and Chamber Orchestra. Victor set M-481, three discs, price \$6.50.

MOZART: *Concerto in C major, K. 467*; played by Artur Schnabel and London Symphony Orchestra, direction Malcolm Sargent. Victor set M-486, four discs, price \$8.00.

MOZART: *Concerto in C minor, K. 491*; played by Edwin Fischer and London Philharmonic Orchestra, direction of Lawrence Collingwood. Victor set M-482, four discs, price \$8.00.

MOZART: *Concerto in D major, K. 537* ("Coronation"); played by Wanda Landowska (piano) and Chamber Orchestra direction of Walter Goehr. Victor set M-483, four discs, price \$8.00.

■ Five piano concertos by Mozart! Truly a treasure trove!

One hardly knows which concerto to recommend above the others, since each has its special attractions; yet the musical quality is not consistently high among the five. But Mozart has a way of always rewarding his listener, and in his piano concertos many of his most treasurable qualities are revealed. And, as I have said elsewhere, to many the most appealing of the concertos may well be the one they are hearing.

The two-piano concerto is the only one of its kind that Mozart wrote. It dates from his Salzburg days. The piano writing is most effectively devised and the unity of the two keyboards is excellently achieved. The Schnabels do better by this work than they did by the Bach two-piano concerto, although their playing here is by no means conclusive. Theirs is a vital performance, if somewhat too robust. Since the recording is good there is plenty of pleasure to be derived from the set.

Fischer plays two concertos, the genial G major and the more profound C minor. Both

performances are fine examples of the artist's insight into the music of Mozart. There is sheer delight in his version of the G major, appropriately framed in a performance making use of a chamber orchestra in preference to a full symphony. The C minor is a work of greater scope, poignant in its dramatic intensity; here the use of the larger orchestra fits the broader canvas. I would mark these two concertos as "must haves" to all true Mozartians.

The *C major Concerto* represents the truly great Mozart. It too will be a "must have". Schnabel does notable justice to it; it is in fact his best Mozart performance on records. Only one complaint can be voiced — Schnabel's cadenzas are *not* Mozart, despite the fact that he makes use of some of the composer's material. The slow movement of this work is so beautiful that it quite defies description. A work that belongs in every Mozart collection.

Landowska as a pianist proves less interesting than as a harpsichordist. Her tone is somewhat on the brittle side, and although her technical artistry remains impeccable, her lack of sensibility, particularly in the slow movement, which she embellishes in part with some unnecessary decorations, leaves much to be desired. I like her better in the first and last movements, where the glitter and brilliancy of the music benefit by her verve. There is much to admire in this performance, however, and the fact that a chamber orchestra has been used is all to the good.

Two of these concertos have been recorded previously, the G major and the "Coronation". Neither of the older sets however is preferable to the newer ones. Fischer gives a more sensitive performance than Dohnanyi did of the G major, and although Tagliaferro's performance of the "Coronation" was more sympathetic than Landowska's, the recording and the balance in the earlier set were extremely bad. Mechanically all of the new sets are completely satisfying.

—P. H. R.

Chamber Music

MOZART: *Sonata in F major, K. 377*; played by Adolf Busch, violin, and Rudolf Serkin, piano. Victor discs Nos. 15175/6, price \$4.00.

■ This is one of six sonatas "for harpsichord or pianoforte with the accompaniment of a violin" dedicated to a Mlle. Auernhammer and published in 1781. It is presented

here complete on two discs, in a splendid performance by Messrs. Busch and Serkin.

A magnificent and deeply felt work, the sonata consists of an allegro seething with the restless drive of triplets; a theme and variations full of pathos, the last variation—a *siciliana*—anticipating in rhythm and feeling the finale of the great *D minor Quartet*; and a *Tempo di Menuetto*, quite undance-like and actually a curious kind of rondo.

The performance is a model of clarity, taste, and balance. Mr. Serkin, who has the lion's share of the work, comes through brilliantly, and he is ably complemented by his distinguished partner. This sonata has also been recorded by Lili Krauss and Simon Goldberg, for the Mozart Violin Sonata Society. Since I have not heard that version, I can only say that the present recording represents a completely satisfactory job.

—N. B.

BEETHOVEN: *Quartet in E flat major, Opus 127*; played by the Busch Quartet. Victor set M-489, five discs, price \$10.00.

BEETHOVEN: *Quartet in A minor, Opus 132*; played by the Busch Quartet. Victor set M-490, eleven sides, price \$11.00.

SCHUBERT: *Quartet in D minor ("Death and the Maiden")*; played by the Busch Quartet. Victor set M-468, four discs, price \$8.

■ The Busch Quartet has exhibited its superlative musicianship on records before, but in these three sets it veritably excels itself. Such playing as we have here is rare indeed, rare not alone in its blending of technical mastery with musical sensibility, but its deep comprehension. Concerning the greatness of all three of these works the responsive listener will not be in doubt after hearing these performances.

We have had other remarkable performances of these works on records: the Flonzaley Quartet some years ago gave a performance of Opus 127 marked by fine precision and unity, but the recording tone lacked warmth; more recently the Lener Quartet gave an almost unapproachably devotional reading of Opus 132; and the Roth Quartet provided us with a splendidly played performance of the Schubert work. As fine as these previous performances are, it is our opinion that the Busch ensemble has topped them all. The first violinist, who has been accused in the past of a certain dryness of tone, here confounds his critics and plays with heartfelt warmth, especially in the slow movements. The felicities in the nuanced

COLUMBIA

Features

DEBUSSY: *Nocturnes (Nuages, Fetes, Sirenes)*, and **DEBUSSY:** *Fanfare*; **DUKAS:** *Fanfare*; played by Orchestre des Festivals Debussy, direction D. E. Inghelbrecht.

Set No. 344 \$6.00

European critics have acclaimed these as the best existent recordings of the exquisite and delicately shaded *Nocturnes* by the great impressionist, Debussy. Inghelbrecht, a composer and conductor of note, studied at the Paris Conservatoire where he came under the influence of Debussy in his last years. The close friendship of the two men assisted in making him one of the composer's foremost exponents.

ROUSSEL: *Quartet in D major, Op. 45*; played by the Roth Quartet.

Set No. 339 \$5.00

It is fitting that the Roth Quartet should record Roussel's only quartet, for it was this group who introduced it first to the acclaim of the Paris public and also American audiences. The work has been marked as having an affinity to the famous Debussy Quartet through its deeply searching slow movement. Roussel regarded the Roth's performance of this work as an ideal one.

BRAHMS: *Waltzes, Op. 39, and Ballade in D minor ("Edward")*, Op. 10, No. 1; played by Anatole Kitain.

Set No. 342 \$5.00

Anatole Kitain, the Russian pianist, is establishing a fine reputation for himself in Europe and in this country through his excellent recordings. Brahms' love of Vienna was responsible for these charming musical cameos, a sort of series of diversions in waltz atmosphere rather than waltz time.

LISZT: *Venezia e Napoli (apres une lecture de Dante)*; played by Louis Kentner.

Set X-105 \$3.25

Kentner is regarded as one of the greatest living exponents of Liszt music. He is a virtuosos pianist of the front rank, as his playing here conclusively proves. The *Tarantella* is regarded as one of Liszt's most difficult pieces for the piano, but as Kentner plays it one is only aware of its effectiveness, not its difficulties.

HOLST: *St. Paul's Suite (For String Orchestra)*; played by Jacques String Orchestra. Two 10-inch discs, Nos. 17113-4-D, price \$1.00 each.

Holst is one of the most important British composers of the 20th century. His *St. Paul's Suite* has long been highly regarded for its vivacity and charm. It is here given a brilliant and vital performance by an English conductor long associated with music at Oxford.

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holding of phrases are particularly cherishable. The reproduction is entirely satisfying.

—P. H. R.

ROUSSEL: *Quartet in D major, Opus 45*; played by the Roth Quartet. Columbia set 339, three discs, price \$5.00.

■ Turning from the classics the Roth Quartet gives us this month a modern French work, a work which this worthy organization had the honor of introducing to the public in 1932 and which has since been widely played. Roussel completed his only string quartet five years before his death. Here, as in his *Serenade* and his *Trio*, he uses the simplest of materials, which he exploits with his keen musical insight and subtlety. Although the work is modern in its harmonic idiom, it is not as daringly temperamental or as dissonant as his *Symphony in G minor* (recorded) or his *Second Sonata*, for violin and piano (unrecorded). Roussel has been accused of writing music more from the head than the heart, an assertion which is quietly but definitely refuted in the deeply-felt, lyric poetry of the *Adagio* in this quartet: for the mood here is closely related to that engendered by the slow movements of the Debussy and the Ravel quartets. The whole quartet is essentially pure music, all previous predilections for picturesque and poetic themes being absent from this score. As in all of Roussel's music, "his independent, bold and thoughtful individuality is distinctly asserted". Particularly is this true in the fugal finale. The work is divided into four movements, a graciously rhythmic opening allegro, the noble adagio, a witty scherzo, and a notable finale. The Roth Quartet play with polish and distinction. The composer is said to have been completely satisfied with their rendition.

—P. H. R.

Keyboard

BACH: *Toccat in D major* (three sides), and **PACHELBEL:** *Two Magnificats*; played by Wanda Landowska on the harpsichord. Victor discs 15171-2, price \$4.00.

■ Landowska must be regarded, when we speak of harpsichordists, the supreme virtuoso of her chosen instrument. Her élan and elegance are rare attributes. Although the purist may decry her brilliance and her esprit, the player has a power of utterance not to be denied. Her performance here of Bach's *Toccat in D major*, of lesser stature

than its predecessor in C minor, is a highly vitalized and technically impressive one, more effectively voiced in its detail and its timing than was an earlier version of it issued by Columbia.

In selecting two pieces by Bach's noted forerunner, Pachelbel, the artist had added wisely to her phonographic contributions, for this composer is not yet adequately represented on records.

Mechanically the pieces here are full and sonorous, but not over-amplified as was the case with the artist's recording of the *Italian Concerto*.

—P. G.

BACH-BUSONI: *Chaconne*; played by Johana Harris. Victor set M-506, two discs, price \$3.50.

■ Although popular with pianists in concert, this is not one of Busoni's most successful transcriptions. It does not, for example, measure up to his splendid arrangement of the Bach *Prelude and Fugue in E flat*. As Mr. Broder has said, there is more of Busoni here than Bach, which is understandable since Bach wrote this work for solo violin. Mrs. Harris, wife of the composer, gives a warmer and more resilient performance of the *Chaconne* than Wolff did in a previous recording, but she also concentrates too much on its Bachian elements. If the work is to be played at all "that which is Busoni's should be rendered unto him". In not striving to stretch her own prowess beyond its physical capacity, the artist is wise, however, for she possesses neither the masculine strength nor the fervor of a Rubinstein or a Schnabel. For this reason her finale is lacking in conclusiveness. The recording is tonally warm and consistently clear.

—P. G.

BOEHM: *Partita über die Arie: Jesu du bist allzu schöne*; played by Yella Pessl, harpsichord. Victor 10-inch disc, No. 1938, price \$1.50.

■ George Böhm (1661-1733) was an older contemporary of Bach. His clavier works are said to be among the most important before Bach. The present "partita" is a series of variations on an old German tune. They are interestingly varied, in figuration as well as rhythm, and are given a sound and enthusiastic performance by Miss Pessl.

—N. B.

LISZT: *Venezia e Napoli*; played by Louis Kentner. Columbia set X-105, two discs, price \$3.25.

■ Published in 1861 as an appendix to his Italian section of the *Années de Pèlerinage*, this music represents the showman Liszt, rather than the true musician. Here we have the glitter and technical *élan* with which Liszt undoubtedly dazzled his many lady friends, as well as their friends, at afternoon parties and evening affairs. Although it consists of three sections, *Gondoliera*, *Canzone*, and *Tarantella*, the pianist here plays only the outer movements of the work. *Gondoliera* is "a pasteboard kind of Venice", as one reviewer has said. The *Tarantella* is another story; although pianistically more impressive, it is at the same time empty exhibition. Technically it is tremendously difficult.

Kentner, who is regarded as one of the foremost Lisztian players, recently gave us the composer's *Ballade in B minor*, a far better work. The present composition gives him an opportunity to display his accomplishments at the keyboard; everything is accurate and clearly set forth, but after it's all over one is tempted to ask—why. The recording is startlingly life-like, except that the upper register of the piano does not rattle in the concert hall.

—P. G.

BRAHMS: *Waltzes, Opus 39* (5 sides); and *Ballade in D minor (Edward) Opus 10, No. 1*; played by Anatole Kitain. Columbia set 342, price \$5.00.

■ Everybody who plays, or plays at, the piano will have his own idea of how these waltzes should be performed. Originally written for two pianos, they are undeniably far more effective on the whole as piano solos. Most pianists have a tendency to over-sentimentalize some of them and to hurry others. Not so Kitain; he gives the correct time value to all the notes and eschews the exploitation of any excessive sentiment. His work is more objective than Backhaus', and though it is not lacking in requisite contrast between the pieces, he does not seek to delineate them by exploiting any tonal sensuousness at any time. Backhaus was more affectionate in his playing of some of the waltzes, notably Nos. 2, 7, and 15, but in others he lacked the tonal fullness and brightness (perhaps owing to recording) of Kitain. Whereas Backhaus played all sixteen waltzes on three record faces, Kitain has

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spaced them onto five. From a reproductive standpoint Kitain has been much better served; particularly is this true in the *Ballade*, the melancholy austerity of which he exploits more fully. —P. H. R.

Instrumental

COWELL: *Two Chorales and Ostinato*; played by Vivian Fine, piano, and Josef Marx, oboe, and BEYER: *Two Movements* from *Suite for Clarinet and Bassoon*; played by Rosario Mazzeo, clarinet, and Raymond Allard, bassoon. New Music Quarterly Recording No. 1413, price \$1.50.

■ There are two chorales and an Ostinato here, taken from Cowell's *Three Ostinati with Chorales for Oboe and Piano*. The music is mildly humorous, as he describes it, "take-offs on all sorts of neo-classicism." Johanna Magdalena Beyer's *Suite* is represented here by the second and fourth movements. The two instruments are broadly contrasted, and the dissonance, we are told, results not as a sought-for effect but rather as the outcome of the association of two melodic lines. Aurally this music will be attractive only to those who admire the two instruments, which tonally here do not always blend to the best advantage. The recording of both pieces has been satisfactorily contrived, but the playing is by no means completely adequate. One has the feeling that the musicians rehearsed the compositions especially for the recording, and that they were not entirely convinced of the value of their task.

—P. G.

TSCHAIKOWSKY: *Scherzo, Opus 42, No. 2* (Edited by Zimbalist); and STRAVINSKY (Trans. Dushkin): *Berceuse* from *The Fire Bird*; played by Nathan Milstein with Leopold Mittmann at the piano. Columbia disc, 10-inch, 17115D, price \$1.00.

■ Milstein plays here with his customary suavity and polish; a sort of an encore record. Transcription again! Yes, but these are among the accepted and usually justified ones. It's all a matter of taste, something that none of us has to apologize for, even if our snooty friends raise an eyebrow or grumble in their beards. As an often distraught reviewer I may be excused the observation — I wonder how many actually buy a record like this! Columbia already has the *Berceuse* played on a record by Dushkin and Stravinsky. —P. H. R.

FRANCAIX: *Sérénade Comique*; and Bozzi: *Scherzo*; played by the Saxophone Quartet of Paris. Columbia disc 388-M, price 75c.

■ That witty young Frenchman, Jean Francaix, has turned out a neat little trick, a slyly humorous piece for the Saxophone Quartet of Paris, which he appropriately calls *Comic Serenade*. Don't miss it, it's good fun; and so too is its companion, a saucy, jovial scherzo.

—P. G.

• •

GERSHWIN MEMORIAL ALBUM. Victor C-29. Price \$7.50.

■ A generally attractive and tasteful collection of Gershwiniana, this five-record set features Jane Froman, Felix Knight and Sonny Schuyler as vocalists and is all under the direction of Nathaniel Schilkret. Covering with amazing thoroughness the really worthwhile Gershwin tunes, including many which most of you have forgotten, particularly those grand songs from *Tip Toes* and *Oh Kay*, it is a fit companion set to the Herbert, Friml and Romberg albums which also bore the Schilkret imprint. The recording, which emanated from an NBC studio, is not as good as the studio recordings of Victor.

—H. V. N.

Vocal

AMERICAN FOLK SONGS: *Poor Wayfaring Stranger*, and *The Old Ship of Zion* (Musicraft disc 221). *Frog Went A-Courting*, *The Barnyard Song*, *Sourwood Mountain*, and *On Springfield Mountain* (Musicraft disc 222). Both sung by the Old Harp Singers. Price \$1.00 each.

■ Here are some authentic folk songs from remote parts of the Upland South. The singers take their name from the fact that the folk in this part of the country still sing from a century-old manual called *The Sacred Harp*. There are different versions of these songs in existence; two of them can be found in Carl Sandburg's *American Songbag*. The present versions were made by Dr. George Pullen Jackson of Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee, the founder of the group, and E. J. Gatwood, its director.

The first disc contains a simple, moving religious ballad and a rousing "spiritual song". The second contains what the singers themselves call "folk fun". Collectively the singers are very fine, but individually the

men are better than the women, particularly as regards diction.

Professor Jackson has promised to write an article for us on the music that the Old Harp Singers feature. —P. G.

BACH: *Komm', süsser Tod*; and HANDEL: *Siciliana*; sung by Marian Anderson, contralto, accompanied by Kosti Vehanen. Victor 10-inch disc No. 1939, price \$1.50.

■ Miss Anderson's voice is as bright and as rich here as ever. The record is marred, however, by what seem to this reviewer lapses from good taste in the Handel number and by faulty rhythm in the Bach song. To pick out a single high tone for special treatment is scarcely good Handel style; and why should Milton's lovely lines (the *Siciliana* is an air from Handel's *L'Allegro*) be sung in German? In Bach's deeply moving *Come, Sweet Death* the singer several times anticipates the beat by a half-count. —N. B.

GRIEG: *Vaaren*, and *Monte Pincio*; sung by Eide Norena with orchestral accompaniments. Victor disc 15180, price \$2.00.

VERDI: *Ave Maria*, and STRADELLA: *Pietà, Signore*; sung by Eide Norena with orchestral accompaniments. Victor disc 15181, price \$2.00.

■ Norena's voice is a silver thread. She sings without effort and with a limpid reed-like quality that makes almost all of her recordings pleasureable experiences.

In her native Norwegian, to orchestral accompaniments, the soprano sings two of Grieg's finest lieder—the beautifully nuanced *Vaaren* or *Der Frühling* and his realistic *Vom Monte Pincio*. In the first song only one verse is recorded, but since the others are simply musical repetitions, nothing is lost.

Vom Monte Pincio is a song worthy of both Schubert and Liszt, a song about the famous hill in Rome, the "hill of gardens", where people promenade and from which the city is viewed and sunsets are watched. The poet speaks of all this, and recalls memories of the past and prophesies Rome's awakening to her former glory. Norena's performance of this song can hardly be improved upon.

Highly regarded in Europe for her portrayal of the role of Desdemona, Norena has already sung for a recording her rendition of the celebrated *Ave Maria* from *Otello*.

RECORD BUYERS' GUIDE

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(Continued on Page 263)

Here, she sings another *Ave Maria* by the versatile Verdi, an independent aria not connected with any opera, which the composer wrote for soprano and strings in 1880, seven years before *Otello*. It is an expressive composition, appropriately plangent and devotional, and quite as effective as the *Otello* excerpt.

Pietà, Signore is a famous aria, popularly attributed to the 17th-century Italian composer, Stradella, but, according to authorities, written by Niedermeyer or Rossini. It is a tender supplication, which Norena voices with admirable restraint.

Balance between the voice and the orchestra has been excellently accomplished. (As in the case of several of Norena's previously listed discs, the labels are reversed on the Grieg songs. The mistake is probably due to incorrect numbering of matrices when forwarded from Europe.)

—P. H. R.

MOZART: *Mass in F major*, K. 192; sung by The Motet Singers with string orchestra. direction of Paul Boepple. Musicraft Album No. 23, three discs, price \$6.50.

■ This *Missa brevis* was written in Salzburg in 1774, when Mozart was 18. Because of the slightness of the accompaniment, which consists of violins, bass, and organ, it has been suggested that the Mass was composed for one of the lesser ecclesiastical occasions. It is not surprising, therefore, that the work lacks the weight and emotional depth of the great unfinished *Mass in C minor* or the *Requiem*. Yet it has endearing qualities, and it throws light on a little known aspect of Mozart's genius.

The style of the Mass is rather mixed. Mozart, already a master of counterpoint, mingles polyphonic with homophonic passages. Some parts are written in serious style; others indicate that even church music was not immune to the influence of the "galant" style that swept through Europe at that time. This is noticeable in the songful *Kyrie* and the innocent *Dona nobis pacem*, which are almost operatic in their lightness. The best parts of the Mass, I think, are the *Credo* and the *Agnus Dei*. The first seems the most homogeneous movement in the work. It is based on and unified by that four-note phrase which haunted Mozart to the end of his days — the phrase that appears in the *B flat Symphony*, K. 319* and elsewhere, being best known as the opening of the last movement

of the "*Jupiter*" *Symphony*. The *Credo* is closely knit, effective, and full of feeling. The *Agnus Dei* is marked by the alternations between soloists and chorus and by the extremely expressive accompaniment.

The Motet Singers, aided by members of the string section of the New York Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra, offer a capable, praiseworthy performance under Mr. Boepple's authoritative direction. There is no organ. It is unfortunate that Musicraft chose this occasion to depart from its highly commendable policy of authentic interpretations of old music. The organ is missed here because nothing audible remains to fill the gap between the violins and basses. The recording is excellent.

—N. B.

MOZART: *Nozze di Figaro*, *Porgi amor* (Act 2), and *Dove sono* (Act 3); sung by Tiana Lemnitz. Victor disc No. 15178, price \$2.00.

■ There is pleasant anticipation in the rumor that Tiana Lemnitz is to sing at the Metropolitan this winter*; and although the roles she will essay have not been announced I could not ask any greater pleasure than that of hearing her as the Countess in *The Marriage of Figaro*, particularly after hearing these arias as she sings them here.

Lemnitz has one of the warmest, richest soprano voices I have ever heard on records, and from all reports from Europe she is a most artistic and satisfying opera singer. *Dove sono* is sung in its entirety here, but without the preceding recitative.

The recording, made in Berlin with the Philharmonic Orchestra, has been excellently accomplished.

—P. H. R.

MUSIC OF THE RENAISSANCE: *Triste estaba el Rey David: De la sangre de tus nobles; La mañana de San Juan* (Mudarra); *Señora, si te olvidare; Al monte sale amor* (Valderabano); *Durandarte; Perdida tengo la color* (Milan); *Con lagrime e sospir* (Willaert); *It was a lover and his lass* (Morley); *Come, heavy sleep; Come again* (Dowland); sung by Max Meili, tenor, with lute accompaniment by Fritz Worsching. Victor set M-495, price \$6.50.

■ Recordings of songs of the great lutenist composers are not yet by any means plentiful, and so this most generous representation

*We learn with regret that there is no foundation to this rumor. — Editor

*Reviewed elsewhere in this issue.

as yet presented will find a waiting public. I hope it will come to the attention of others who have not been waiting for it, too, because the sheer musical pleasure to be derived from them does something which it is rather futile to attempt to describe. Interest in the madrigal has been growing apace these last few years, and anyone fascinated by that form should find its contemporary, the song to the lute, equally attractive.

Of the three discs in the set two are devoted to songs of the Spanish school. A certain dignity and noblesse characterize this music and set it in a niche of its own. Whether it be Mudarra's superb portrayal of the sorrow of King David over the news of the death of Absalom, the same composer's description of the fiesta on the morning of St. John's day, or Milan's ballad of *Durandarte*, each is a perfect thing of beauty and at the same time an expression of a big and genuine humanity. The English songs are charming too, especially those of Dowland, one of the very greatest songwriters in our language. But the gem of the collection, to my mind, is the Willaert madrigal, *Con lagrime e sospir*, whose melody has haunted me pleasurably ever since I first heard it a year or so ago.

Max Meili, the singer of these songs, is known to owners of *L'Anthologie Sonore*. In fact he has sung one of these same songs (*Durandarte*) in that collection. He is a Swiss concert singer with a fine tenor voice and unusual musicianship. He sings every song in the set with real conviction and understanding, though his pronunciation of the English language is at times strange, to say the least. If we can overlook this one fault (or be amused by it) the album will be a source of endless pleasure. Both the lute playing of Fritz Worsching and the recording of the HMV engineers are as fine as we could ask for. —P. M.

PUCCINI: *Tosca* - *E lucevan le stelle*, and *La Fanciulla del West* - *Ch'ella mi creddo libero*; sung by Jussi Bjoerling, with orchestra conducted by Nils Grevillius. Victor disc 4408, 10-inch, price \$1.00.

■ Bjoerling has youth and exuberance. His voice is a natural, but he has much to learn about style. In the first half of the *Tosca* aria his singing is excellent, but later he becomes explosive. The same thing happens in the *Girl of the Golden West* excerpt. His Italian is not too good; apparently he has been taught it phonetically. Unaware that

RECORD BUYERS' GUIDE

(Continued from Page 261)

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247 South 15th Street

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MILWAUKEE, Wis.

Helen Gunnis Record Shop
226 East Mason Street

LONDON, W. C. 2, England

Rimington, Van Wyck, Ltd.
42/43 Cranborn Street

All shops listed in the Record Buyers' Guide are fully endorsed by The AMERICAN MUSIC LOVER and are equipped to take excellent care of your record requirements.

Minnie is an American name he pronounces it as though it were Italian, singing Min-ee-aye (instead of Mee-nee, as some native Italians do). The recording here is excellent.

—P. G.

REYER: *Sigurd* - *Esprits gardiens*; and GOUNOD: *Mireille* - *Anges du Paradis*; sung by Georges Thill. Columbia disc 9147M, price \$1.50.

■ Ernest Reyer (1823-1909) is best known for his opera, *Sigurd*, a French version of the Siegfried story. First produced in Brussels in 1884, it has been retained in the French repertoire ever since. The music of *Sigurd*, as of *Salamambo*, another of the composer's better known operas, is said to owe much to Wagner (we hear it in the recitative to the aria recorded here), Berlioz, Gluck and even Weber. (Reyer certainly

recognized good company.) Typically 19th-century opera with its arias and set pieces, *Sigurd* offers its singers many effective scenes — one of which Thill offers here.

Mireille is not one of Gounod's best scores, but it too is still produced, not infrequently, in Paris. The tenor aria above is not too impressive.

The fine masculine timbre of Thill's voice is always enjoyable on records. He sings here with his customary assurance and conviction. In the *Sigurd* aria he is too close to the microphone on his top tones, but outside of this criticism the reproduction does the singer justice. —P. G.

RUSSELL: *Children of Men*; and LEWIS-DE ROSE: *I Heard a Forest Praying*; sung by John Charles Thomas. Victor disc 1940. 10-inch, price \$1.00.

■ It has always been our contention that a great artist as universally admired as Mr. Thomas is, does not need to curry to popular taste. We believe that he could pioneer greater appreciation of more worthy song-material on records; and, in so doing, satisfy a double audience instead of limiting himself to one. It stands to reason that admirers of his voice would support his records, and there is every reason to believe that a larger group of them would prefer better fare. The singer is in fine voice here, and the recording is kind to his voice. —P. G.

STRAUSS: *Traum durch die Dämmerung*, and *Der Nacht*; sung by Herbert Janssen. Victor disc No. 1930, 10-inch, price \$1.50.

SCHUMANN: *Widmung*, and *Die Lotosblume*; sung by Herbert Janssen. Victor disc No. 1931, 10-inch, price \$1.50.

With an impeccability of diction, and a fervor and spontaneity that has only been previously matched on records by Lotte Lehmann, Janssen proves himself a fine lieder singer in these discs. Style and expression are well mated, and the musical line and the poet's text conveyed with splendid masculine feeling and warmth.

Strauss' *Der Nacht* has long been needed in a modern recording; the only other version of it we know was made in the acoustical era by Schlusnus.

Gerald Moore provides excellent accompaniments here, and the balance between voice and piano has been nicely realized in the recording. —P. H. R.

SCHWEDOFF: *Aus dem Aufstieg des Don Kossaken* (*The Epic of Serge Jaroff's Don Cossack Choir*); and *Terek und Kuban Kossaken* (*The Song of the Terek Cossacks*); sung by Don Cossack Choir. Columbia disc 4217M, 10-inch, price \$1.00.

■ The general formula for Russian choir singing would seem to be to begin softly and gradually build, increasing and swelling the voices like an organ crescendo. That effect is employed here. The first selection might be called the theme song of the choir. It starts quietly with solo voices against a background of vocal harmonies, and then changes into a rowdy affair with whistling and shouting. The other song is more artistic. It starts with a bass soloist whose voice curiously recalls Chaliapin's. Enthusiastic admirers of this choral group will find them as effective here as elsewhere in their singing. The recording is somewhat diffused in the opening of both pieces. —P. H. R.

WAGNER: *Die Meistersinger - Preislied*, and *Lohengrin - In fernem Land*; sung by Charles Kullman with orchestra conducted by Walter Goehr. Columbia disc 9146M, price \$1.50.

■ Here are two of the most admirable recordings that Kullman, the young American tenor, has made. Particularly welcome is his youthful enthusiasm in the *Preislied* and his elation in the narrative. These are not conventional performances, but carefully prepared, well thought-out and enthusiastically conveyed ones. The singer's diction is highly commendable. The recording is well balanced and the orchestral backgrounds are appropriately full. —P. H. R.

Correspondence

To the Editor of The American Music Lover.

Dear Mr. Reed:

Inasmuch as you are usually willing to subscribe to anything to the good of our hobby I would like to enlist your support toward getting a better representation of the ballad composer Loewe in our domestic catalogs.

Victor does not list the two selections sung by Onegin in their recent catalog and those were the only Loewe I have ever been able to find on Victor. Columbia has only Ivar Andresen's *Der sel'ne Beter* to represent Loewe in their catalog unless one includes *Der Erlkoenig* by George Henschel. Tibbett's *Edward* is so definitely Tibbett that one could not class it as Loewe.

Record Collectors' Corner

Julian Morton Moses

Polydor has a wealth of fine Loewe recordings that should be available to Columbia. Along this line I cannot see why Columbia does not repress Polydor records on their fine surfaces. Perhaps there is something to do with the contract, but they could use a Brunswick-Polydor label and include them in the regular Columbia lists, using Columbia record serial numbers. Maybe you could put that over, I haven't been able to, — but this is getting away from Loewe.

Victor has many fine artists available and in particular Paul Bender who could give us a wealth of Loewe records. Why not an album of his ballads, or a society?

Decca has some fine Loewe recordings pressed on their *gravel road* surfaces and if one could hear them above the needle scratch they might be pretty good. Something ought to be done about Decca. They are keeping a lot of fine records out of circulation.

I guess this is a conglomerate letter, but you will undoubtedly be able to figure it out. What I mean is we need more Loewe Ballads on domestic recordings. I have been importing Loewe from Europe and if I had a few Coolidge or Hoover dollars I could go on doing that but the Roosevelt dollars don't go far enough.

Very truly yours,

ERNST HEBERLEIN.

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To the Editor of *The American Music Lover*.

Dear Mr. Reed:

More than a year ago I became a subscriber to your indispensable monthly and feel that you might like to know how greatly I have enjoyed it since then. Naturally, as a would-be collector, the Record Reviews in each issue claim my attention first but I read all the articles and notes, and especially your pertinent editorials, with equal interest and appreciation. I feel that the several articles on needles and tone-arm alignment were particularly welcome and a very real service to all of us.

My pet ambition at present is to form a society along the lines of the Dallas Gramophone Society, but with this significant difference: instead of membership being restricted to those owning phonographs and record libraries this club of ours would welcome all those who love good music, whether owning records or not, with the definite idea in mind that they ultimately will feel the urge to own their private collections. Thus, we will have made new enthusiasts and not merely have banded together the old. Incidentally, when and if I get this "pet" of mine started, I intend to rely on my copies of *The American Music Lover* to arouse and sustain the interest of our group. I am quite sure they will be a valuable asset in that respect.

I'd like to hear from any of your subscribers in my vicinity regarding this matter if you can spare a line to the effect in some future issue.

May I express my appreciation and thanks for the addition of the portrait inserts in your recent issues? These sentiments must be widespread among all your readers and I, for one, hope the practice will be continued indefinitely.

Towards an ever-widening circle of American Music Lovers, I remain yours sincerely,

C. RUSSELL KEEVER.

North Hollywood, Calif. July 31, 1938.

■ ON OTHER PAGES IN THIS ISSUE, THERE will be found extensive comment on Miss Geraldine Farrar's recently published autobiography. Further articles will deal in even greater detail with her outstanding performances on records and elsewhere. It remains my pleasant privilege to offer some remarks on recording as it was practiced in her day and to preface these with a discerning statement by the gracious diva herself.

First let Miss Farrar state her own views, which, at the instigation of Mr. Reed, she has forwarded to us:

"Recording in those early days of its innovation was somewhat of a hazard for the singer who prized a free flowing tone and jealously guarded his certain individual peculiarities of timbre and dynamics. I think the singing profession was encouraged to believe in a faithful reproduction when the fabulous Caruso voice was laid upon the wax disc for posterity's enchantment.

"Undoubtedly the latter-day electrical recordings give a beautifully clear and balanced wave line, but to my personal way of thinking, the recording apparatus — or those who operate it — too often amplifies a tenuous material, and thus present a sound-line rather than a tone quality.

"After all, this latter precious endowment was the distinguishing feature of the individual and should not be urged beyond its natural resiliency.

"Its expression and color should predominate over the monotony of mere volume."

—Geraldine Farrar.

These illuminating words, with which there can hardly be disagreement, serve to remind us how precarious an undertaking was this business of making records when a sort of roller coaster had to be used for the majority of the singers we now envy. Likewise, it explains the tragedy which befell certain voices such as that of the great Marcella Sembrich, whose "hooty" recorded quality belies her true tonal beauty.

When Miss Farrar speaks of "a hazard for the singer who prized a free flowing tone" she refers no doubt to the difficulty the singer of the acoustic era had in focusing her voice into the limited confines of the old recording horn. If the tone was deflected so that it struck the horn on the sides, the resultant recorded vibration was very apt to cause a blast in the future reproduction. This was particularly true of high tones. And, as the singer had to move backward each time she came to a high note, the dangers she encountered in achieving "a free flowing tone" can readily be understood.

Miss Farrar may be said to have been generally successful in her recording work. Her voice was one among a relatively few great singers that recorded well, although it cannot be said that all her records did her full justice. Alma Gluck, John McCormack and Caruso among others possessed what were considered really good recording voices. The voices of many great singers, as we hear them from acoustic recordings, do not do them full justice. Conversely, there are many critics who claim that the voices of many second-rate singers are heard to far better advantage through their (acoustic) recordings than was the case in their public performances. This latter fact has led to many record collectors reviving interest in the second-rate artists and advancing the theory that, judging from their flattering recordings, they were among the first rank stars in their day. This, of course, was not the case.

To return to Miss Farrar, her statement leads us to understand that the continual re-making of popular selections (a common practice with the Farrar best-sellers) was done with a purpose other than to confuse later collectors. Only a deity can tell now, though, why the same catalogue number was used for different recordings, often as far apart as ten years; and only an experienced devotee of the label cult can tell which version of the *Madame Butterfly* excerpts a particular label specifies.

Be that as it may, I urge all readers of these pages to be at their radio dials when Geraldine Farrar is guest of the "Voice of

the Past" program to be broadcast from Radio Station WQXR Monday evening, November 21st. 7 to 8 p. m.

Repressings for this month include the following from the International Record Collector's Club:

MEYERBEER: *Le Prophet - Roi du ciel*, Charles Dalmores (autographed); and DE LARA: *Rondel l'adieu*, Maurice Renaud. 10-inch, No. 131, price \$1.75.

LEONCAVALLO: *Roland von Berlin - Elsbeth's Gesang*; and MATTEI: *Dear Heart*, sung by Geraldine Farrar (autographed); 10-inch, No. 132, price \$1.75.

FLOTOW: *Martha - Canzone del Porter*, and FAURE: *Credo*, sung by Pol Plancon. 10-inch, No. 133, price \$1.75.

From the Historic Record Society:

VERDI: *Forza del Destino - Urna fatal*; and ROSSINI: *Barbiere - Manca un foglio*, sung by Ferruccio Corradetti. 10³/₄-inch, No. 1036, price \$2.25.

VERDI: *Masked Ball - Non sai tu*, and *O qual soave*; sung by Eugenia Burzio and Giovanni Zenatello. 10³/₄-inch, No. 1029, price \$2.25.

The Dalmores recording, a first edition, is a fine example of his artistic singing, and so too is the Renaud recording. The Farrar releases are excerpts from her very interesting 1905 Berlin recordings. They show the freshness and beauty of her early voice. Plancon's *Martha* aria is one of his best records, revealing a trill that any singer might well envy.

The Burzio-Zenatello duet, made in 1905, represents both artists at the peak of their careers. I have never heard a better recording of the noted tenor. Corradetti, who now lives and teaches in New York, was a highly esteemed and versatile artist in his day. His singing was distinguished for its vocal flexibility, which permitted him to portray buffo as well as dramatic parts.

Correspondence

To the American Music Lover.

Concerning Mr. Julian Moses's interesting article on Mme. Michailova, in the September issue of *The American Music Lover*, may I say that she also made Zonophone, Lyrophone, and Pathe records. Her full name in English is Marie Alexandrovna Michailova Van Puteren. Tugarinoff is spelled Clavdija Alexeevna Tugarinova.

I. R. C. C. MEMBER FROM
WASHINGTON STATE.

October 4, 1938.

RECORD COLLECTORS NEW LISTS

Obsolete and rare disc phonograph records - FREE. A different and better auction and exchange for the disposal of collector's surplus material.

DIXIE RECORD CLUB

36 N. E. First Street

Miami, Florida

Swing Music Notes

Enzo Archetti

■ THE SWING MUSIC SEASON IS BACK WITH US again — fortissimo and in the groove. And for the first time in many months we are swamped with news, announcements, and new recordings to be noticed. Now we'll stop beating around, wasting valuable space, and get down to facts.

Of major importance is the extra-special two-hour jam session to be held on November 5th at the Hickory House, in New York, to be broadcast to Europe, and probably locally also, although this is not definite yet. The nucleus of the jam session is Joe Marsala's orchestra, of course, but this party is being planned as an open-house affair and about thirty musicians from almost as many bands available at the time have been asked to sit in. The world of jazz lovers is invited to attend up to the capacity of the Hickory House. This promises to be one of the most important events of the season.

Hugues Panassie's long promised visit to America has at last taken place. He is here now seeing and hearing all there is to see and hear in the jazz world and being feted by all who know and recognize his position as an authority on jazz. As a further recognition of his unique position *Life* magazine is at present preparing a special write-up, to appear in an early issue and the *March of Time* is planning a special film sequence concerning him, to be included in their next release. Jazz and the jazz writer are no longer novelties. They take their rightful place alongside the news and the personalities of this age.

Pee-Wee Russell has formed his own band, which is scheduled to open shortly at the Little Club, the former Onyx Club. The personnel up to the time of writing is Pee-Wee, Max Kaminsky, Joe Bushkin and Sid Weiss. The other members of the band are still uncertain.

Jimmy Lunceford and his band are definitely going over to the Vocalion label . . . For release in the near future: a Bob Crosby album featuring the full band and the Bob Cats. The sponsor is Decca . . . Under the same label, an album of piano blues featur-

THE FRIENDS OF RECORDED MUSIC

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Latest Recordings

SCRIABINE: *Piano Sonata No. 4 in F sharp major, Opus 30*. Katherine Ruth Heyman. Disc 20.

CLEMENTI: *Piano Sonata in B flat Major, Opus 47, No. 2* (3 sides); HAESSLER: *Grande Gigue* (1 side). Arthur Loesser. Discs 21-22.

Previous Issues

HAYDN: *Sonata in F major (No. 20 in Peter's Edition)*. Arthur Loesser. Disc 19.

BRAHMS: *Piano Sonata No. 2 in F sharp minor, Opus 2*. Arthur Loesser. Discs 15, 16 and 17, in album, 50 cents extra.

CLEMENTI: *Piano Sonata in G minor, Op. 50, No. 3* (Didone Abbandone). Arthur Loesser. Discs 13 and 14.

CHARLES T. GRIFFES: *Piano Sonata*. Harrison Potter. Discs 10 and 11.

ERNEST BLOCH: *Five Sketches in Sepia*. Harrison Potter. Disc 12.

(The above discs recorded by Musicraft, have been praised as some of the most remarkable piano recordings ever made in this country.)

BOCCHERINI: *String Quartet in A major, Opus 33, No. 6*, played by Kreiner Quartet. Discs 1 and 2.

MOZART: *String Quartet in E flat, K-171*, played by Kreiner Quartet. Discs 3 and 4.

GRIFFES: *An Indian Sketch*, Kreiner Quartet, and *The Lament of Ian the Proud*, William Hain, tenor, with Jerome T. Bohm at piano. Disc 5.

ARIOSTI: *Cantata for Voice, Viola d'Amore and Piano*. Lucile Dresskell, soprano; Miles Dresskell, viola d'amore; Sara Knight, piano. Disc 8.

SCHOENBERG: *Klavierstueck, Opus 11, No. 2*, and SCRIABINE: *Flammes Sombres, Opus 73*. Katherine Ruth Heyman. Disc 9.

Advisory Board for The Friends of Recorded Music
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If your dealer does not have any of the above records, arrangements can be made to hear any recordings in which you are interested by writing to THE AMERICAN MUSIC LOVER, 12 East 22nd Street, New York City.

ing Count Basie and Mary Lou Williams. This also is due for release soon . . . Mary Lou Williams is no longer with Andy Kirk's band. She is at present unattached . . . *Life* magazine is planning a several page spread on Bob and Bing Crosby . . . Chu Berry, Frank Newton, Eddie Condon, Jess Stacey and Zutty Singleton have a recording date for some Commodore discs . . .

The Hot Record Society, of New York, having completed its scheduled release of twelve repressings of jazz classics, has turned to another field. It is now sponsoring a new make of record called *Hot Record Society Originals*, and it makes an auspicious beginning with three original recordings:

Baby Won't You Please Come Home (Warfield-Williams), and *Dinah* (Askt-Lewis-Young), played by Pee-Wee Russell's Rhythmakers (personnel: Pee-Wee Russell, clarinet; Max Kaminsky, trumpet; Dicky Wells, trombone; Al Gold, tenor sax; Jimmy Johnson, piano; Freddie Green, guitar; Zutty Singleton, drums; Wellman Braud, bass). H. R. S. 1000, price \$1.00.

Jimmy Johnson leads with a short introduction, which sets a good bouncing rhythm, immediately followed by a duet by Max Kaminsky and Pee-Wee. Then Jimmy has a chorus to himself — delightfully sung. Pee-Wee takes up from there but his hot tone is spoiled by a raucousness which is thoroughly unpleasant. He plays much to close to the microphone. That emphasizes his lower register, which was never his best. Then there is a half-chorus each by Max and Dicky Wells both of which are clean cut and a joy to hear. The final chorus is remarkably restrained considering what has gone before.

Dinah opens at a terrific pace. The full orchestra led by Max keeps the original tune recognizable until Pee-Wee's solo, which is still too low-down and too raucous. Max's clean-cut half-chorus is soothing to the ears after Pee-Wee's solos. Freddie Green's guitar gives the piece some bounce and Dicky adds a few hot comments. All of which leads to Jimmy Johnson's swell chorus. Jimmy's playing is, in some ways, reminiscent of Fats Waller's, especially in this particular disc when he somehow manages to squeeze in *Johnny Get Your Gun*, and *Yes, We Have No Bananas* without changing either the mood or the pace of *Dinah*. However, by this time the original tune is completely unrecognizable, and the whole structure is but an excuse for some excellent jamming. The all-in, with Max and Pee-Wee leading, bring the record to an exciting close.

Horn of Plenty Blues (traditional), and *There'll Be Some Changes Made* (Higgins-Overstreet); played by Pee-Wee Russell's Rhythmakers (personnel the same as in the above record). H. R. S. 1001, price \$1.00.

A good blues in the best Negro manner. A short introduction by Pee-Wee. Dicky Wells follows with a heartfelt chorus in blues style. Dicky is no Caruso but he knows his blues. Zutty backs him superbly. Max follows with a chorus which is perfectly in keeping with the mood. Then comes the weakest part of the disc, and in my opinion, the let-down. Zutty doubles the pace and leads an all-in-finale, entirely out of focus with what has gone before.

Changes starts with a good fast tempo. Max leads with a fairly straight chorus backed by Pee-Wee. Then Pee-Wee drops out while Max plays another chorus with Zutty supporting. Here there is some excellent drumming which keeps the rhythm remarkably exciting. The finale bounces to a fine close led by Max and Pee-Wee.

I've Found a New Baby (Wililams-Palmer), and *Everybody Loves My Baby* (Palmer-Williams). Played by Pee-Wee Russell Trio (personnel: Pee-Wee Russell, clarinet; Jimmy Johnson, piano; Zutty Singleton, drums). H. R. S. 1002, price \$1.00.

A short introduction by Jimmy and Pee-Wee takes a chorus in the high register. Some of the best playing he has done up to now. Clean, hot tone! Jimmy follows with a bouncy Johnsonian chorus. Then Pee-Wee and Zutty concoct one of the screwiest combinations put on records: clarinet and drums, very hot and with a suggestion of pseudo-orientalism. Zutty plays a whole chorus on the cymbal, backed by piano chords! The final chorus is burning hot and Zutty keeps the same cymbal beat right through to the end, plainly audible through the tones of the other two players. The tune disappeared after the first few bars of the disc and the rest is a typical jam piece.

In *Everybody* Pee-Wee leads with a full chorus supported by Jimmy and some very discreet drumming by Zutty. Here his lower register work is excellent. Jimmy bounces right in after him with a chorus of his own and then Zutty repeats practically the same performance as on the other side, but on a different cymbal. The finale is very loud and very hot.

The Hot Record Society is to be commended for these first releases. They are destined to be collector's items, despite the fact that the recording could be improved.

In the Popular Vein

Horace Van Norman

Standard Popular

AAAA—*Swamp Fire*, and *The Man on the Flying Trapeze*. Andre Kostelanetz and his Orchestra. Brunswick 8226.

AAAA—*Tiger Rag*, and *Casey Jones*. Andre Kostelanetz and his Orchestra. Brunswick 8233.

■ These are apparently more products of the same recording session which was responsible for the brilliant disc reviewed here last month. To even begin to do an adequate job of reviewing on these discs is to exhaust all the superlatives at your command before you've even gotten well started. This is, of course, as we have been at some pains to point out in the past in reviewing Kostelanetz's work, not the purest jazz there is, if indeed it is jazz at all. And it is just as certainly not concert music, as judged by any conveniently conventional standard. It is rather an entirely fresh, original and superbly vital form of its own, one that could only have been produced by as unpredictable a medium as the radio. A superbly skillful amalgamation of purely native musical ideas with a prodigious sophistication in writing for the orchestra, it is a little as though Maurice Ravel had been born in Kankakee or Kalamazoo, of pure American stock, in the early years of this century, and with a Gargantuan sense of humor. If such a person really existed, this, I imagine is the kind of stuff he might logically turn out. How a native Russian with a comparatively short residence in this country comes to be responsible for this minor miracle in our national scene I do not pretend to know.

The thing you most notice about his work, as exemplified by these recordings in particular, is his constant search for new and striking orchestral devices and sonorities. The introduction to *Casey Jones*, for example, I believe to be one of the most graphic pieces of musical realism ever achieved. It makes Honegger's *Pacific 231* sound like the Toonerville Trolley. *Swamp Fire*, as a whole, is probably the most successful of them all. Far better adapted to this kind of treatment

Hot Jazz

AAAA—*Margie*, and *Russian Lullaby*. Benny Goodman and his Orchestra. Victor 26060.

■ These are strikingly brilliant expositions of the justly famous Goodman style, more brilliant, in fact, than anything the band has done in months. The virtuosity of the band is constantly increasing, the brass section in particular appearing to shape up as the finest choir of its kind ever assembled. With Goodman's own meticulous musicianship to hold it together, it seems destined for a more permanent kind of popularity than most of us thought possible at first. And with Dorsey and Clinton nipping at his heels, he'll have to stay plenty good if he intends to keep at the head of the pack, which we believe he will, at least until he retires from swing and becomes Benjamin Goodman, chamber music musician.

AAA—*Carolina Moon*, Tommy Dorsey and his Orchestra, and *Carolina Moon*, Swing and Sway with Sammy Kaye. Victor 26072.

■ No one record has ever illustrated the vast gulf which separates swing from non-swing more perfectly than has this one. Two recordings of the very same tune, both of which follow the original theme with a reasonable degree of fidelity, they are as completely unlike each other as two recordings could possibly be. Which gives proof (if proof were needed) that swing is not what you say but the way you say it. The fact that

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—contains literary contributions, biographies, translations and technical articles.

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England

than most swing novelties. it is quite unforgettable in Kostelanetz's superlative arrangement and performance.

AAA—*Two Sleepy People*, and *Have You Forgotten So Soon?* Swing and Sway with Sammy Kaye. Victor 26067.

■ Hoagy Carmichael, after years of distinguished but extremely intermittent songwriting, seems finally to be assuming the place among the consistent hit producers which is rightfully his, thanks to the beneficent auspices of Paramount Pictures, whom he is currently under contract to. With *Small Fry*, *Heart and Soul*, and now *Two Sleepy People*, all big hits and all appearing within the space of a few months, Hoagy seems to be edging into the surefire group at last. It is rather a commentary on the sort of work he is now doing, however, that a tune of his should be assigned to someone like Sammy Kaye, instead of someone like Goodman or Dorsey. For it's unquestionably Kaye's type of tune and he makes the most of it, pouring on the corn syrup until you call for help. It is, incidentally, rather odd that, concurrently with the rise of swing to an unprecedented degree of popularity, there should also exist a school of bands almost equally popular which are the very antithesis of everything the swingsters stand for. Lombardo, Garber, Kyser and Kaye, virtually indistinguishable from each other but all tremendously popular and poles away from the jammers, continue placidly dishing out the corn and are prospering mightily, thank you.

AAA—*My Reverie*, and *How Can We Be Wrong?* Eddy Duchin and his Orchestra. Brunswick 8224.

■ Debussy's *Reverie*, latest of the classics to be swung, is rather more fortunate than some in that the boys really take it seriously and try to make something of it instead of kidding it to death as they did *M'Appari* from *Martha*. Duchin's version is extremely effective, involving a neat but emotional presentation on the piano by Eddie himself that puts it into the right key, as it were, since it is a piano piece anyway and does not orchestrate, either swing or otherwise, with any great degree of success. *How Can We Be Wrong?* is an excellent new Arthur Schwartz tune that somehow didn't get into the score of a show and Duchin does nicely with this too. Kaye's way of saying *Carolina Moon* is undoubtedly the right one for the tune, but that

Dorsey's seems much the more authentic one while you're listening to it, is some sort of commentary on swing, but just what I haven't had the patience to quite figure out.

AAA—*The Mooche*, and *Baby, When You Ain't There*. Duke Ellington and his Orchestra. Brunswick 8241.

■ Two Ellington revivals (re-pressings, that is), the former from a decade ago, the latter about half as old. There is little in either of them that seems outdated. For, alone among dance band leaders, Ellington is an artist, a creator, an individual in the fullest sense of the word, who, in a field where everyone is furiously attempting to imitate everyone else, remains unexampled because he remains himself.

OTHER CURRENT POPULAR RECORDINGS

(The following are rated from quality of performance regardless of record quality.)

AAA—*Nightmare*, and *Non-Stop Flight*. Artie Shaw and his Orch. Bluebird B-7875.

AAA—*Swing Pan Alley*, and *Chasin' Chippies*. Cootie Williams and his Rug Cutters. Vocalion 4425.

AAA—*Sing You Sinners*, and *Hearts and Flowers*. Matty Malneck and his Orchestra. Decca 2060.

AAA—*Jamboree Jones*, and *Sing a Song of Sixpence*. Paul Whiteman and his Swing Wing. Decca 2074.

RECORD SALES AND EXCHANGES

Rates: Advertisements for this section are priced at 25 cents a line, with a minimum charge of 50 cents.

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(Continued on Inside Back Cover)

Our Radio Dial

(Eastern Standard Time)

NBC HIGHLIGHTS FOR NOVEMBER

Red Network

Sundays—

10:30 A.M.—Music and American Youth
11:30 A.M.—Madrigal Singers
1:00 P.M.—Meridian Music
1:30 P.M.—Benna Rabinoff, violinist
8:00 P.M.—Chase and Sanborn Program

Mondays—

8:30 P.M.—Voice of Firestone

Tuesdays—

7:15 P.M.—Vocal Varieties

Wednesdays—

6:30 P.M.—Music Is My Hobby
8:30 P.M.—Tommy Dorsey Orchestra

Thursdays—

7:15 P.M.—Vocal Varieties
7:30 P.M.—Mario Cozzi, baritone

Fridays—

8:00 P.M.—Cities Service Concert
9:00 P.M.—Waltz Time

Blue Network

Sundays—

12:30 P.M.—Radio City Music Hall
2:00 P.M.—RCA Magic Key
5:00 P.M.—Metropolitan Opera Auditions
6:00 P.M.—New Friends of Music

Mondays—

2:30 P.M.—Alma Kitchell, contralto
3:00 P.M.—Rochester Civic Orchestra

Tuesdays—

1:30 P.M.—Rochester Civic Orchestra
3:00 P.M.—Piano Recital
3:15 P.M.—U. S. Army Band

Wednesdays—

10:00 P.M.—Magnolia Blossoms—Fisk Jubilee Choir
10:30 P.M.—NBC-Minstrel Show

Thursdays—

2:30 P.M.—Light Opera Selections — Harold Sanford
8:30 P.M.—Rochester Phil. Orch.

Fridays—

2:00 P.M.—NBC Music Appreciation Hour
(November 18)
9:00 P.M.—Paul Martin and His Music

Saturdays—

9:00 P.M.—National Barn Dance
10:30 P.M.—Toscanini and NBC Symphony

COLUMBIA HIGHLIGHTS FOR NOVEMBER

CBS Network

Sundays—

9:00 A.M.—From the Organ Loft with Julius Mattfield
12:30 P.M.—Salt Lake City Tabernacle
3:00 P.M.—N. Y. Phil. Orchestra (Beg. Oct. 23)
9:00 P.M.—Ford Sunday Evening Hour

Mondays—

3:00 P.M.—Curtis Institute of Music
10:30 P.M.—Story of the Song

Tuesdays—

5:00 P.M.—Music for Fun
9:30 P.M.—Camel Hour — Benny Goodman

Wednesdays—

4:30 P.M.—Columbia Concert Hall
8:30 P.M.—Paul Whiteman
9:00 P.M.—Everybody's Music, Howard Barlow

Thursdays—

3:00 P.M.—U. S. Army Band

Saturdays—

11:00 A.M.—Philharmonic Young People's Concert
5:00 P.M.—Columbia Concert Orchestra
7:00 P.M.—Swing Session

(Subject to Change)

(Continued from Page 270)

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AN INFLUENCE IN RADIO

IT is more than two years since I wrote requesting permission to use "The American Music Lover" for certain notes and reviews on our daily symphony recorded programme, Radio Orchestra Hall. Since that permission was granted, the magazine has proved invaluable in my collection of comments for broadcast purposes which come from many sources. I wish to state that your wonderful publication has served me and our listeners in making these concerts the most popular in Boston. I feel humbly indebted to you and your excellent staff for many hours of enthralled reading and it goes without saying that your magazine is regarded here as the Number One authority on record reviews.

Many of the articles in American Music Lover have prompted me to make up programmes that illustrate the article clearly, the most recent example of which was our "Comic Strip" Concert, using Mr. George Brewster's article in the October issue. It was received with enthusiasm by the audience and I hope more material appears that can conjure up novel presentations both for the reader and the listener. Of course, every time your magazine is used as basis for comment, several inquiries appear in our voluminous mail asking about the magazine, so I feel that I have done somewhat of a service in getting a wider field for my favorite music publication.

Again, many thanks for this gem of magazines. It "rings the bell" every month for me and thousands who listen to our concerts.

With kindest wishes for greater success, I am

Respectfully yours,

MORTON BLENDER

Musical Dir., WCOP, Boston, Mass.

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